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ABSTRACT

This revised edition of the "Learning Standards for English Language Arts" for New York State incorporates changes to the content standards and performance indicators based on extensive review by the public. The four standards described in the booklet are that students will read, write, listen, and speak (1) for information and understanding; (2) for literary response and expression; (3) for critical analysis and evaluation; and (4) for social interaction. The format for displaying the standards in the booklet includes the label for the standard; the key ideas that define the standard; performance indicators that describe the required expectations for students at elementary, intermediate, and commencement levels; and sample tasks that suggest evidence of appropriate progress toward the standard at a given level. New in this edition are samples of student work, along with teachers' comments on the work. (RS)

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LEARNING STANDARDS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

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Learning Standards for

English Language Arts

Revised Edition
March 1996

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Regents of The University

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Acknowledgments

Many contributors to this document are recognized in the *Preliminary Draft Framework for English Language Arts*. We are also grateful to the many teachers from throughout New York State who contributed performance tasks and samples of student work for possible inclusion in this revised edition. Listed below are the names of those educators who submitted or reviewed the materials that appear in this document.

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Introduction

This revised edition of the *Learning Standards for English Language Arts* incorporates changes to the content standards and performance indicators based on extensive review by the public. It should be considered a working document; as educational practice improves, these standards will continually be revised.

In this document, the format for displaying the standards includes the following:

- the **label** for the standard (e.g., Language for Information and Understanding)
- the **key ideas** that define the standard (preceded by [1] or [2])
- the **performance indicators** that describe the required expectations for students at elementary, intermediate, and commencement levels (preceded by bullets [•]) and
- sample tasks that suggest **evidence** of appropriate progress toward the standard at a given level (preceded by triangles [▲]).

For each standard, the key ideas, performance indicators, and examples of evidence are listed first for the receptive language skills of listening and reading, then for the expressive language skills of speaking and writing. Within each of these categories, listening or speaking is listed first to acknowledge the usual order of development in the learner.

At different levels of the same standard, performance indicators incorporate five dimensions of growth that increase in complexity at successive levels. Those dimensions are *range, flexibility, connections, conventions,* and *independence*. The *At a Glance* charts on pages 5, 9, and 17 provide an overview of the kinds of language activities that best support the standards, the criteria that characterize the language function represented by the standard, and specific application of the dimensions of growth to that standard.

New in this edition are samples of student work, along with teachers' comments on the work. The examples are intended to provide some ideas of tasks that support attainment of the performance standards. They are not models of excellence. Rather, they represent various levels of acceptable work. It is important to remember that these are just suggestions of ways that students can demonstrate progress toward achieving the standards.

The State Education Department will continue to collect and publish samples of student work. As teachers become more familiar with the standards and students become more proficient in meeting them, the level of the performance standards and content standards will continue to rise.

Taken together, the content standards and the performance standards define the learning standards for students in English language arts.

The Board of Regents recognizes the diversity of students in New York State, including students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency, gifted students, and educationally disadvantaged students, and has made a strong commitment to integrating the education of all students into the total school program. The standards in the framework apply to all students, regardless of their experiential background, capabilities, developmental and learning differences, interests, or ambitions. A classroom typically includes students with a wide range of abilities who may pursue multiple pathways to learn effectively, participate meaningfully, and work towards attaining the curricular standards. Students with diverse learning needs may need accommodations or adaptations of instructional strategies and materials to enhance their learning and/or adjust for their learning capabilities.

Learning Standards for English Language Arts at Three Levels

Standard 1: **Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding.**

As listeners and readers, students will collect data, facts, and ideas; discover relationships, concepts, and generalizations; and use knowledge generated from oral, written, and electronically produced texts. As speakers and writers, they will use oral and written language to acquire, interpret, apply, and transmit information.

Standard 2: **Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression.**

Students will read and listen to oral, written, and electronically produced texts and performances, relate texts and performances to their own lives, and develop an understanding of the diverse social, historical, and cultural dimensions the texts and performances represent. As speakers and writers, students will use oral and written language for self-expression and artistic creation.

Standard 3: **Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation.**

As listeners and readers, students will analyze experiences, ideas, information, and issues presented by others using a variety of established criteria. As speakers and writers, they will present, in oral and written language and from a variety of perspectives, their opinions and judgments on experiences, ideas, information and issues.

Standard 4: **Students will read, write, listen, and speak for social interaction.**

Students will use oral and written language for effective social communication with a wide variety of people. As readers and listeners, they will use the social communications of others to enrich their understanding of people and their views.

Standard 1—Language for Information and Understanding

Listening and Reading

1. Listening and reading to acquire information and understanding involves collecting data, facts, and ideas; discovering relationships, concepts, and generalizations; and using knowledge from oral, written, and electronic sources.

Students:

- **gather and interpret information from children's reference books,magazines, textbooks, electronic bulletin boards, audio and media presentations, oral interviews, and from such forms as charts, graphs, maps, and diagrams**
- **select information appropriate to the purpose of their investigation and relate ideas from one text to another**
- **select and use strategies they have been taught for note-taking, organizing, and categorizing information**
- **ask specific questions to clarify and extend meaning**
- **make appropriate and effective use of strategies to construct meaning from print, such as prior knowledge about a subject, structural and context clues, and an understanding of letter-sound relationships to decode difficult words**
- **support inferences about information and ideas with reference to text features, such as vocabulary and organizational patterns.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ accurately paraphrase what they have heard or read
- ▲ follow directions that involve a few steps
- ▲ ask for clarification of a classmate's idea in a group discussion
- ▲ use concept maps, semantic webs, or outlines to organize information they have collected.

Speaking and Writing

2. Speaking and writing to acquire and transmit information requires asking probing and clarifying questions, interpreting information in one's own words, applying information from one context to another, and presenting the information and interpretation clearly, concisely, and comprehensibly.

Students:

- **present information clearly in a variety of oral and written forms such as summaries, paraphrases, brief reports, stories, posters, and charts**
- **select a focus, organization, and point of view for oral and written presentations**
- **use a few traditional structures for conveying information such as chronological order, cause and effect, and similarity and difference**
- **use details, examples, anecdotes, or personal experiences to explain or clarify information**
- **include relevant information and exclude extraneous material**
- **use the process of pre-writing, drafting, revising, and proofreading (the "writing process") to produce well-constructed informational texts**
- **observe basic writing conventions, such as correct spelling, punctuation, and capitalization, as well as sentence and paragraph structures appropriate to written forms.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ write a short report on a topic in social studies using information from at least two different sources
- ▲ demonstrate the procedures for caring for a classroom pet using props or other visual aids as well as oral explanation
- ▲ revise early drafts of a report to make the information clearer to the audience
- ▲ use the vocabulary from their content area reading appropriately and with correct spelling
- ▲ produce brief summaries of chapters from text books, clearly indicating the most significant information and the reason for its importance.

Key ideas are identified by numbers (1).
Performance indicators are identified by bullets (•).
Sample tasks are identified by triangles (▲).

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Students will read, write, listen, and speak for information and understanding.

Intermediate

Listening and Reading

1. Listening and reading to acquire information and understanding involves collecting data, facts, and ideas; discovering relationships, concepts, and generalizations; and using knowledge from oral, written, and electronic sources.

Students:

- **interpret and analyze information from textbooks and nonfiction books for young adults, as well as reference materials, audio and media presentations, oral interviews, graphs, charts, diagrams, and electronic data bases intended for a general audience**
- **compare and synthesize information from different sources**
- **use a wide variety of strategies for selecting, organizing, and categorizing information**
- **distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information and between fact and opinion**
- **relate new information to prior knowledge and experience**
- **understand and use the text features that make information accessible and usable, such as format, sequence, level of diction, and relevance of details.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ produce a summary of the information about a famous person found in a biography, encyclopedia, and textbook
- ▲ use facts and data from news articles and television reports in an oral report on a current event
- ▲ compile a bibliography of sources that are used in a research project
- ▲ take notes that record the main ideas and most significant supporting details of a lecture or speech.

Speaking and Writing

2. Speaking and writing to acquire and transmit information requires asking probing and clarifying questions, interpreting information in one's own words, applying information from one context to another, and presenting the information and interpretation clearly, concisely, and comprehensibly.

Students:

- **produce oral and written reports on topics related to all school subjects**
- **establish an authoritative stance on the subject and provide references to establish the validity and verifiability of the information presented**
- **organize information according to an identifiable structure, such as compare/contrast or general to specific**
- **develop information with appropriate supporting material, such as facts, details, illustrative examples or anecdotes, and exclude extraneous material**
- **use the process of pre-writing, drafting, revising, and proofreading (the "writing process") to produce well-constructed informational texts**
- **use standard English for formal presentation of information, selecting appropriate grammatical constructions and vocabulary, using a variety of sentence structures, and observing the rules of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ write an essay for science class that contains information from interviews, data bases, magazines, and science texts
- ▲ participate in a panel discussion on population trends in the United States in recent years, using graphics, and citing the source of the data
- ▲ use technical terms correctly in subject area reports
- ▲ survey student views on a school issue and report findings to the class.

STANDARD 1

Standard 1—Language for Information and Understanding

Communication

Listening and Reading

1. Listening and reading to acquire information and understanding involves collecting data, facts, and ideas; discovering relationships, concepts, and generalizations; and using knowledge from oral, written, and electronic sources.

Students:

- **interpret and analyze complex informational texts and presentations, including technical manuals, professional journals, newspaper and broadcast editorials, electronic networks, political speeches and debates, and primary source material in their subject area courses**
- **synthesize information from diverse sources and identify complexities and discrepancies in the information**
- **use a combination of techniques (e.g., previewing, use of advance organizers, structural cues) to extract salient information from texts**
- **make distinctions about the relative value and significance of specific data, facts, and ideas**
- **make perceptive and well developed connections to prior knowledge**
- **evaluate writing strategies and presentational features that affect interpretation of the information.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ incorporate information from several noted experts to support a thesis in a research paper
- ▲ assemble notes for historical and artistic exhibits
- ▲ use an electronic data base and other graphic presentations to find evidence of trends for a sociological study
- ▲ produce flow charts and diagrams to show the relationships among information from different sources
- ▲ determine the relative value of different reference materials for a particular research question.

Speaking and Writing

2. Speaking and writing to acquire and transmit information requires asking probing and clarifying questions, interpreting information in one's own words, applying information from one context to another, and presenting the information and interpretation clearly, concisely, and comprehensibly.

Students:

- **write and present research reports, feature articles, and thesis/support papers on a variety of topics related to all school subjects**
- **present a controlling idea that conveys an individual perspective and insight into the topic**
- **use a wide range of organizational patterns such as chronological, logical (both deductive and inductive), cause and effect, and comparison/contrast**
- **support interpretations and decisions about relative significance of information with explicit statement, evidence, and appropriate argument**
- **revise and improve early drafts by restructuring, correcting errors, and revising for clarity and effect**
- **use standard English skillfully, applying established rules and conventions for presenting information and making use of a wide range of grammatical constructions and vocabulary to achieve an individual style that communicates effectively.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ demonstrate how to perform an intricate task, such as how to operate a computer program or conduct a laboratory experiment
- ▲ write an extended research report on a complex issue or topic that documents sources of information and is well organized to convey overarching ideas and supporting evidence and details
- ▲ write a report of a scientific inquiry that observes the conventions of scientific writing, the rules of evidence, and the correct usage of technical terms
- ▲ produce program notes for an art exhibit or concert with background information on the works and artists.

Key ideas are identified by numbers (1).
Performance indicators are identified by bullets (•).
Sample tasks are identified by triangles (▲).

Language for information and understanding

AT A GLANCE

INFORMATIONAL LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES	CRITERIA FOR INFORMATIONAL LANGUAGE	EVIDENCE OF GROWTH
(Examples only, not an exhaustive list)	***Focus on the message being communicated and the purpose of the information***	**RANGE (breadth and depth of texts, topics, issues, treatments)**
READING of: essays textbooks newspapers and magazines encyclopedias history books nonfiction books scientific journals technical manuals electronic data bases	**PUBLIC** - The information must be clear and understandable to a public audience.	• of primary source material • of discourse conventions • of strategies for recording, organizing, and transmitting information
WRITING of: essays lists and outlines summaries research reports feature articles technical reports instructional manuals	**EFFICIENT** - The information should be presented concisely.	**FLEXIBILITY (performance in changing and varied conditions)** • in adapting mode of delivery to purpose and audience • in control of presentational strategies • in switching from one disciplinary context to another
LISTENING to: classroom instructions group discussions lectures documentary films news broadcasts panel discussions	**VALID** - The facts and data must be accurate, precise, and relevant to the purpose.	**CONNECTIONS (ability to see commonalities between ideas, texts, contexts)** • in relating new information to the familiar • in generalizing and particularizing • in using and interpreting metaphor or analogy
SPEAKING for: group discussion panel presentation giving directions for projects presenting research findings	**VERIFIABLE** - Information must be well-founded and able to be traced to a reliable source.	**CONVENTIONS (rules, protocols, traditional practices)** • associated with the forms and formats of informational texts • associated with patterns and structures • associated with grammar, usage, punctuation, spelling
	AUTHORITATIVE - Information is presented in conjunction with the individual's position on its significance.	**INDEPENDENCE (ability to perform without models or direction)** • in establishing purposes • in locating resources • in deciding significance • in selecting from available options • in achieving an individual style

STANDARD 1

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Standard 2—Language for Literary Response and Expression

Elementary

Listening and Reading

1. Listening and reading for literary response involves comprehending, interpreting, and critiquing imaginative texts in every medium, drawing on personal experiences and knowledge to understand the text, and recognizing the social, historical and cultural features of the text.

Students:

- **read a variety of literature of different genres: picture books; poems; articles and stories from children's magazines; fables, myths and legends; songs, plays and media productions; and works of fiction and nonfiction intended for young readers**
- **recognize some features that distinguish the genres and use those features to aid comprehension**
- **understand the literary elements of setting, character, plot, theme, and point of view and compare those features to other works and to their own lives**
- **use inference and deduction to understand the text**
- **read aloud accurately and fluently, using phonics and context cues to determine pronunciation and meaning**
- **evaluate literary merit.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ read a picture book to the class and point out how the pictures add meaning to the story
- ▲ recite a favorite poem from a class anthology and tell why they chose that poem
- ▲ keep a reading inventory to show all the types of literature they are reading
- ▲ retell a familiar fairy tale or fable to the class
- ▲ choose books to read individually or with others.

Speaking and Writing

2. Speaking and writing for literary response involves presenting interpretations, analyses, and reactions to the content and language of a text. Speaking and writing for literary expression involves producing imaginative texts that use language and text structures that are inventive and often multilayered.

Students:

- **present personal responses to literature that make reference to the plot, characters, ideas, vocabulary, and text structure**
- **explain the meaning of literary works with some attention to meanings beyond the literal level**
- **create their own stories, poems, and songs using the elements of the literature they have read and appropriate vocabulary**
- **observe the conventions of grammar and usage, spelling, and punctuation.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ perform dramatic readings or recitations of stories, poems, or plays
- ▲ write a review of a book to recommend it to their classmates
- ▲ create their own picture books or fables to keep in the classroom library
- ▲ write new endings or sequels to familiar stories
- ▲ pretend to be a character in a historical story and write letters to their classmates about the character's life.

Key ideas are identified by numbers (1).
Performance indicators are identified by bullets (•).
Sample tasks are identified by triangles (▲).

STANDARD 2

Students will read, write, listen, and speak for literary response and expression.

Intermediate

Listening and Reading

1. Listening and reading for literary response involves comprehending, interpreting, and critiquing imaginative texts in every medium, drawing on personal experiences and knowledge to understand the text, and recognizing the social, historical and cultural features of the text.

Students:

- **read and view texts and performances from a wide range of authors, subjects, and genres**
- **understand and identify the distinguishing features of the major genres and use them to aid their interpretation and discussion of literature**
- **identify significant literary elements (including metaphor, symbolism, foreshadowing, dialect, rhyme, meter, irony, climax) and use those elements to interpret the work**
- **recognize different levels of meaning**
- **read aloud with expression, conveying the meaning and mood of a work**
- **evaluate literary merit based on an understanding of the genre and the literary elements.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ read or recite poems of their own selection to the class, clearly conveying the meaning of the poem and the effect of the rhythm and rhyme patterns
- ▲ produce lists of recommended readings for their peers, grouping the works according to some common elements (e.g., theme, setting, type of characters)
- ▲ use references to literature they have read to support their position in class discussion.

Speaking and Writing

2. Speaking and writing for literary response involves presenting interpretations, analyses, and reactions to the content and language of a text. Speaking and writing for literary expression involves producing imaginative texts that use language and text structures that are inventive and often multilayered.

Students:

- **present responses to and interpretations of literature, making reference to the literary elements found in the text and connections with their personal knowledge and experience**
- **produce interpretations of literary works that identify different levels of meaning and comment on their significance and effect**
- **write stories, poems, literary essays, and plays that observe the conventions of the genre and contain interesting and effective language and voice**
- **use standard English effectively.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ take part in class productions of short plays
- ▲ write a sequel to a story continuing the development of the characters, plot, and themes
- ▲ write reviews of literature from different cultural settings and point out similarities and differences in that literature
- ▲ write stories or poems for their peers or younger children.

STANDARD 2

Standard 2—Language for Literary Response and Expression

Listening and Reading

1. Listening and reading for literary response involves comprehending, interpreting, and critiquing imaginative texts in every medium, drawing on personal experiences and knowledge to understand the text, and recognizing the social, historical and cultural features of the text.

Students:

- **read and view independently and fluently across many genres of literature from many cultures and historical periods**
- **identify the distinguishing features of different literary genres, periods and traditions and use those features to interpret the work**
- **recognise and understand the significance of a wide range of literary elements and techniques, (including figurative language, imagery, allegory, irony, blank verse, symbolism, stream-of-consciousness) and use those elements to interpret the work**
- **understand how multiple levels of meaning are conveyed in a text**
- **read aloud expressively to convey a clear interpretation of the work**
- **evaluate literary merit based on an understanding of the genre, the literary elements, and the literary period and tradition.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ read a selection of poems of different forms, including sonnets, lyrics, elegies, narrative poems, and odes, and recognize the effect of the structure and form on the meaning
- ▲ act out scenes from a full length play in class
- ▲ read literary pieces on a common theme from several literary periods (such as Renaissance, Neo-Classical, Romantic, Realistic, Naturalistic, and Contemporary) and compare the treatments of the theme in those periods
- ▲ read and interpret works of recognized literary merit from several world cultures and recognize the distinguishing features of those cultural traditions
- ▲ view stage or film productions of a major play or novel and discuss the interpretation of the work that is evident in the production.

Speaking and Writing

2. Speaking and writing for literary response involves presenting interpretations, analyses, and reactions to the content and language of a text. Speaking and writing for literary expression involves producing imaginative texts that use language and text structures that are inventive and often multilayered.

Students:

- **present responses to and interpretations of works of recognized literary merit with references to the principal features of the genre, the period, and literary tradition, and drawing on their personal experiences and knowledge**
- **produce literary interpretations that explicate the multiple layers of meaning**
- **write original pieces in a variety of literary forms, correctly using the conventions of the genre and using structure and vocabulary to achieve an effect**
- **use standard English skillfully and with an individual style.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ write stories or poems using such literary structures and devices as stanzas and chapters, metaphors, foreshadowing, symbolism, and different forms of dialogue and narration
- ▲ take part in productions of full length plays
- ▲ put together a collection of literature from different cultures around a common theme and write the introduction to the collection explaining the similarities and differences
- ▲ write an interpretation of a major nineteenth-century novel discussing the features of the novel that reflect the conventions of the genre in that time period.
- ▲ write interpretations of works of recognized literary merit including a discussion of the principal features of the genre, the period, and the tradition.

Key ideas are identified by numbers (1).
Performance indicators are identified by bullets (•).
Sample tasks are identified by triangles (▲).

STANDARD 2

Language for Literary Response and Expression

AT A GLANCE

LITERARY LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES	CRITERIA FOR LITERARY LANGUAGE	EVIDENCE OF GROWTH
(Examples only, not an exhaustive list)	***Focus on the "poem," i.e., the literary work and its unique language.***	**RANGE (breadth and depth of texts, topics, issues, treatments)**
READING of: picture books stories myths, fables, legends poems plays novels literary essays literary criticism	**PERSONAL** - Literary response and expression present the insights and ingenuity of the student and should be connected to the individual's prior knowledge and experience. The style and diction of student literary writing should be distinctive and personal. In the best literary expression, the style is as unique and identifiable as a fingerprint.	• of literary genres, authors, periods, traditions, and cultures • of literary elements • of critical approaches to literature
WRITING of: personal responses interpretations literary analyses critiques explications of texts original stories, sketches, poems, plays, literary essays	**TEXTUAL** - Literary language depends on the exact words, lines, images, and structures of the text. Conventions must be appropriate to the genre and the literary tradition to which the work belongs. Meaning is found in the language of the poem, not in paraphrase or summary.	**FLEXIBILITY (performance in changing and varied conditions)** • in adapting to the genres • in control of presentational strategies • in accommodating diverse cultural traditions
LISTENING to: oral readings of literature stage plays films	**MULTILAYERED** - Meanings are both explicit and literal, and implied and symbolic. Language is clear, but often intentionally ambiguous.	**CONNECTIONS (ability to see commonalities between ideas, texts, contexts)** • in relating new texts to others • in using prior knowledge to interpret literature • in using metaphor
SPEAKING for: oral readings recitations of literary passages dramatic presentations group discussions of literature		**CONVENTIONS (rules, protocols, traditional practices)** • of the genre, period, and tradition • of standard English
		INDEPENDENCE (ability to perform without direction) • in selecting literature • in adopting an interpretive approach • in producing imaginative texts • in achieving an individual style

STANDARD 2

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Standard 3—Language for Critical Analysis and Evaluation

Elementary

Listening and Reading

1. Listening and reading to analyze and evaluate experiences, ideas, information, and issues requires using evaluative criteria from a variety of perspectives and recognizing the difference in evaluations based on different sets of criteria.

Students:

- **read and form opinions about a variety of literary and informational texts and presentations, as well as persuasive texts such as advertisements, commercials, and letters to the editor**
- **make decisions about the quality and dependability of texts and experiences based on some criteria, such as the attractiveness of the illustrations and appeal of the characters in a picture book, or the logic and believability of the claims made in an advertisement**
- **recognize that the criteria that one uses to analyze and evaluate anything depend on one's point of view and purpose for the analysis**
- **evaluate their own strategies for reading and listening critically (such as recognizing bias or false claims, and understanding the difference between fact and opinion) and adjust those strategies to understand the experience more fully.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- listen to a book talk in class and express an opinion of the book with specific reference to the text and to some criteria for a good book
- read several versions of a familiar fairy tale and recognize the differences in the versions
- point out examples of false advertising in television ads for toys
- identify the facts and opinions in a feature article in a children's magazine.

Speaking and Writing

2. Speaking and writing for critical analysis and evaluation requires presenting opinions and judgments on experiences, ideas, information, and issues clearly, logically, and persuasively with reference to specific criteria on which the opinion or judgment is based.

Students:

- **express opinions (in such forms as oral and written reviews, letters to the editor, essays, or persuasive speeches) about events, books, issues, and experiences, supporting their opinions with some evidence**
- **present arguments for certain views or actions with reference to specific criteria that support the argument (E.g., an argument to purchase a particular piece of playground equipment might be based on the criteria of safety, appeal to children, durability, and low cost.)**
- **monitor and adjust their own oral and written presentations to meet criteria for competent performance (E.g., in writing, the criteria might include development of position, organization, appropriate vocabulary, mechanics, and neatness. In speaking, the criteria might include good content, effective delivery, diction, posture, poise, and eye contact.)**
- **use effective vocabulary and follow the rules of grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation in persuasive writing.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ write a letter to the principal recommending that the school cafeteria serve pizza for lunch based on the criteria that it is nutritious and appealing to students
- ▲ give an oral report comparing several versions of the Cinderella story, pointing out similarities and differences in the versions
- ▲ in group discussion, select the most important word of a poem or story and explain its significance
- ▲ write an analysis of the effect of a major snow storm from the perspectives of a school student, a working parent, and a mail carrier
- ▲ in writing group, critique each other's writing with reference to specific criteria and revise their writing based on the group's suggestions.

Key ideas are identified by numbers (1).
Performance indicators are identified by bullets (•).
Sample tasks are identified by triangles (▲).

STANDARD 3

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Students will read, write, listen, and speak for critical analysis and evaluation.

Intermediate

Listening and Reading

1. Listening and reading to analyze and evaluate experiences, ideas, information, and issues requires using evaluative criteria from a variety of perspectives and recognizing the difference in evaluations based on different sets of criteria.

Students:

- **analyze, interpret, and evaluate information, ideas, organization, and language from academic and nonacademic texts, such as textbooks, public documents, book and movie reviews, and editorials**
- **assess the quality of texts and presentations, using criteria related to the genre, the subject area, and purpose (e.g., using the criteria of accuracy, objectivity, comprehensiveness, and understanding of the game to evaluate a sports editorial)**
- **understand that within any group there are many different points of view depending on the particular interests and values of the individual, and recognize those differences in perspective in texts and presentations (E.g., in considering whether to let a new industry come into a community, some community members might be enthusiastic about the additional jobs that will be created while others are concerned about the air and noise pollution that could result.)**
- **evaluate their own and others' work based on a variety of criteria (e.g., logic, clarity, comprehensiveness, conciseness, originality, conventionality) and recognize the varying effectiveness of different approaches.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ compare a magazine article on a historical event with the entries in an encyclopedia and history book to determine the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the article
- ▲ use the criteria of scientific investigation to evaluate the significance of a lab experiment
- ▲ read two conflicting reviews of a popular movie and recognize the different criteria the critics were using to evaluate the film
- ▲ point out examples of propaganda techniques (such as "bandwagon," "plain folks" language, and "sweeping generalities") in public documents and speeches.

Speaking and Writing

2. Speaking and writing for critical analysis and evaluation requires presenting opinions and judgments on experiences, ideas, information, and issues clearly, logically, and persuasively with reference to specific criteria on which the opinion or judgment is based.

Students:

- **present (in essays, position papers, speeches, and debates) clear analyses of issues, ideas, texts, and experiences, supporting their positions with well-developed arguments**
- **develop arguments with effective use of details and evidence that reflect a coherent set of criteria (e.g., reporting results of lab experiments to support a hypothesis)**
- **monitor and adjust their own oral and written presentations according to the standards for a particular genre (e.g., defining key terms used in a formal debate)**
- **use standard English, precise vocabulary, and presentational strategies effectively to influence an audience.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ write a position paper on a current event, clearly indicating their position and the criteria on which it is based
- ▲ present an oral review of a film, supporting their evaluation with reference to particular elements such as character development, plot, pacing, and cinematography
- ▲ participate in a class debate on a social issue following the rules for formal debate
- ▲ produce their own advertising for a product, tailoring the text and visuals to a particular audience.

STANDARD 3

Standard 3—Language for Critical Analysis and Evaluation

Communication of

Listening and Reading

1. Listening and reading to analyze and evaluate experiences, ideas, information, and issues requires using evaluative criteria from a variety of perspectives and recognizing the difference in evaluations based on different sets of criteria.

Students:

- **analyze, interpret, and evaluate ideas, information, organization, and language of a wide range of general and technical texts and presentations across subject areas, including technical manuals, professional journals, political speeches, and literary criticism**
- **evaluate the quality of the texts and presentations from a variety of critical perspectives within the field of study (e.g., using both Poe's elements of a short story and the elements of "naturalist fiction" to evaluate a modern story)**
- **make precise determinations about the perspective of a particular writer or speaker by recognizing the relative weight they place on particular arguments and criteria (E.g., one critic condemns a biography as too long and rambling; another praises it for its accuracy and never mentions its length)**
- **evaluate and compare their own and others' work with regard to different criteria and recognize the change in evaluations when different criteria are considered to be more important.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ compare the majority decision and the dissenting opinions on a Supreme Court case
- ▲ listen to speeches of two political candidates and compare their stands on several major issues
- ▲ read the writing of several critics on the same author and determine what literary criteria each used in evaluating the author and how that accounts for different judgments
- ▲ read a current article on a scientific issue, such as the greenhouse effect, and compare it to an earlier explanation of the same issue.

Speaking and Writing

2. Speaking and writing for critical analysis and evaluation requires presenting opinions and judgments on experiences, ideas, information, and issues clearly, logically, and persuasively with reference to specific criteria on which the opinion or judgment is based.

Students:

- **present orally and in writing well-developed analyses of issues, ideas, and texts, explaining the rationale for their positions and analyzing their positions from a variety of perspectives in such forms as formal speeches, debates, thesis/support papers, literary critiques, and issues analyses**
- **make effective use of details, evidence, and arguments and of presentational strategies to influence an audience to adopt their position**
- **monitor and adjust their own oral and written presentations to have the greatest influence on a particular audience**
- **use standard English, a broad and precise vocabulary, and the conventions of formal oratory and debate.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ write two different analyses of a Supreme Court decision from the perspectives of a "strict-constructionist" and a judicial activist
- ▲ write a review of a technical manual from the perspective of current industry standards
- ▲ deliver a "campaign" speech using a variety of persuasive strategies to influence an audience
- ▲ write an essay comparing critiques from two different centuries of a Shakespearean play.

Key ideas are identified by numbers (1).
Performance indicators are identified by bullets (•).
Sample tasks are identified by triangles (▲).

STANDARD 3

Language for Critical Analysis and Evaluation

AT A GLANCE

ANALYTICAL LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES	CRITERIA FOR ANALYTICAL LANGUAGE	EVIDENCE OF GROWTH
(Examples only, not an exhaustive list) READING of: literature advertisements editorials book and movie reviews literary criticism public documents political speeches position papers professional journals listserves WRITING of: persuasive essays book and movie reviews literary critiques editorials thesis/support papers analyses of issues college application essays LISTENING to: advertising/commercials arguments political speeches debates SPEAKING for: oral book and movie reviews persuasive speeches opinion surveys formal debates interviews	***Focus on the point of view and recognition of the values that underlie the point of view.*** **CONTEXTUALIZED** - An opinion or argument must be grounded in a particular set of values or criteria. Support for an argument depends on recognition of the soundness of the criteria. **FLEXIBLE** - A thorough analysis requires being able to view the same event or text from more than one point of view and recognizing the relative validity of divergent points of view. **CULTURAL** - The criteria for analysis and evaluation derive from the shared values of a group. Recognition of the group whose values are reflected in a position is necessary for a precise understanding of the position.	**RANGE (breadth and depth of texts, topics, issues, treatments)** • of points of view • of issues • of criteria **FLEXIBILITY (performance in changing and varied conditions)** • in selecting and applying criteria for analysis • in adopting different points of view • in adapting argument for audience **CONNECTIONS (ability to see similarities in ideas, texts, and contexts)** • between points of view • between arguments **CONVENTIONS (rules, protocols, traditional practices)** • of genre • of oral and written analysis • of formal debate • of standard English **INDEPENDENCE (ability to perform without direction)** • in establishing a point of view • in applying criteria • in selecting language

STANDARD 3

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Standard 4—Language for Social Interaction

Elementary

Listening and Speaking

1. Oral communication in formal and informal settings requires the ability to talk with people of different ages, genders, and cultures, to adapt presentations to different audiences, and to reflect on how talk varies in different situations.

Students:

- **listen attentively and recognize when it is appropriate for them to speak**
- **take turns speaking and respond to others' ideas in conversations on familiar topics**
- **recognize the kind of interaction appropriate for different circumstances, such as story hour, group discussions, and one-on-one conversations.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ take part in "show and tell" sessions
- ▲ participate in group discussions during "circle time"
- ▲ greet visitors to their school or classroom and respond to their questions
- ▲ bring messages to the principal's office or to another teacher.

Reading and Writing

2. Written communication for social interaction requires using written messages to establish, maintain, and enhance personal relationships with others.

Students:

- **exchange friendly notes, cards, and letters with friends, relatives, and pen pals to keep in touch and to commemorate special occasions**
- **adjust their vocabulary and style to take into account the nature of the relationship and the knowledge and interests of the person receiving the message**
- **read and discuss published letters, diaries, and journals to learn the conventions of social writing.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ write thank you notes and invitations to friends
- ▲ exchange letters with pen pals in another country
- ▲ write letters to relatives who live in another city.

n.b. Because the focus of language for social interaction is on direct communication between individuals (rather than communication to a more general and perhaps unknown audience), the performance indicators for this standard are arranged to reflect the immediacy of direct communication (Listening and Speaking; Reading and Writing).

Key ideas are identified by numbers (1).
Performance indicators are identified by bullets (•).
Sample tasks are identified by triangles (▲).

Students will read, write, listen, and speak for social interaction.

Intermediate

Listening and Speaking

1. Oral communication in formal and informal settings requires the ability to talk with people of different ages, genders, and cultures, to adapt presentations to different audiences, and to reflect on how talk varies in different situations.

Students:

- **listen attentively to others and build on others' ideas in conversations with peers and adults**
- **express ideas and concerns clearly and respectfully in conversations and group discussions**
- **learn some words and expressions in another language to communicate with a peer or adult who speaks that language**
- **use verbal and nonverbal skills to improve communication with others.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ act as hosts for open house at school
- ▲ participate in small group discussions in class
- ▲ give morning announcements over the public address system
- ▲ participate in school assemblies and club meetings.

Reading and Writing

2. Written communication for social interaction requires using written messages to establish, maintain, and enhance personal relationships with others.

Students:

- **write social letters, cards, and electronic messages to friends, relatives, community acquaintances, and other electronic network users**
- **use appropriate language and style for the situation and the audience and take into account the ideas and interests expressed by the person receiving the message**
- **read and discuss social communications and electronic communications of other writers and use some of the techniques of those writers in their own writing.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ write letters to friends who are away
- ▲ send e-mail messages on a computer network
- ▲ send formal invitations for receptions or open houses.

STANDARD 4

Standard 4—Language for Social Interaction

Listening and Speaking

1. Oral communication in formal and informal settings requires the ability to talk with people of different ages, genders, and cultures, to adapt presentations to different audiences, and to reflect on how talk varies in different situations.

Students:

- **engage in conversations and discussions on academic, technical, and community subjects, anticipating listeners' needs and skillfully addressing them**
- **express their thoughts and views clearly with attention to the perspectives and voiced concerns of the others in the conversation**
- **use appropriately the language conventions for a wide variety of social situations, such as informal conversations, first meetings with peers or adults, and more formal situations such as job interviews or customer service.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ take part in and conduct meetings of student organizations
- ▲ interact with community members through community service experience or part-time jobs
- ▲ interview for a job or college acceptance
- ▲ greet visitors at school performances or sports banquets.

Reading and Writing

2. Written communication for social interaction requires using written messages to establish, maintain, and enhance personal relationships with others.

Students:

- **use a variety of print and electronic forms for social communication with peers and adults**
- **make effective use of language and style to connect the message with the audience and context**
- **study the social conventions and language conventions of writers from other groups and cultures and use those conventions to communicate with members of those groups.**

This is evident, for example, when students:

- ▲ participate in electronic discussion groups (e.g., listserv)
- ▲ write letters and personal essays as part of college application
- ▲ write personal notes and letters that entertain and interest the recipient.

Key ideas are identified by numbers (1).
Performance indicators are identified by bullets (•).
Sample tasks are identified by triangles (▲).

STANDARD 4

Language for Social Interaction

AT A GLANCE

SOCIAL LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES	CRITERIA FOR SOCIAL LANGUAGE	EVIDENCE OF GROWTH
(Examples only, not an exhaustive list)	***Focus on the relationship and the establishing of trust and harmony between people.***	**RANGE (breadth and depth of topics, issues, treatments)**
SPEAKING/LISTENING for: **greetings** **introductions** **conversations** **group discussions** **customer service**	**INTERPERSONAL** - Social communication aims at getting to know another person or being together with others.	• **of individuals and groups** • **of topics of conversation** • **of verbal and non-verbal signals**
WRITING of: **notes** **e-mail messages** **memos** **friendly letters** **acknowledgments**	**IMMEDIATE** - Social language is primarily the language of face-to-face communication. Written or electronic messages sent for social purposes try to capture the tone of friendly conversation.	**FLEXIBILITY (performance in changing and varied conditions)** • **in adapting to people of different ages, genders, cultural groups, and social positions** • **in assuming appropriate roles in conversation**
READING of: **notes** **friendly letters** **e-mail** **journal entries**	**APPROPRIATE** - Social language requires selecting the language and behavior appropriate for the relationship, taking into account the age, gender, position, and cultural traditions of the other person or persons. Both verbal and non-verbal signals are important.	**CONNECTIONS (ability to see similarities)** • **with interests, experiences, and feelings of the other person**
		CONVENTIONS (rules, protocols, traditional practices) • **of behavior** • **of tone and diction** • **of verbal and nonverbal language**
		INDEPENDENCE (ability to perform without direction) • **in initiating conversations** • **in adapting language to audience** • **in assuming appropriate role**

STANDARD 4

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Samples of Student Work

The samples of student work included in this section are intended to begin the process of articulating the performance standards at each level of achievement. This collection is not yet adequate for that purpose in either numbers or scope of examples. As New York State continues to collect work samples from the schools for inclusion in the document, we expect a much clearer understanding of the performance standards to be evident.

Neither are these samples presented as models of excellence. They vary in degree of achievement. Some are "acceptable;" others "more proficient." All are meant to provide examples of the kind of work students might produce to demonstrate progress toward the standard.

Standard 1: Language for Information and Understanding

Elementary

Context

For a Social Studies report, fourth grade students went to the State Museum with a mission: Come back with enough information to show how the Iroquois way of life appreciated and protected the world of nature. They were to find information about such activities as farming, hunting, ceremonies, building shelter, and making tools. Then they were to write about whether these activities harmed the natural world compared to the way we do things today.

Performance Indicators

Students can:

. . . gather and interpret information from [appropriate sources]

. . . select information appropriate to the purpose of their investigation and relate ideas from one text to another

. . . present information clearly in a variety of oral and written forms

. . . select a focus, organization, and point of view

. . . use a few traditional structures for conveying information

. . . use details, examples, anecdotes, or personal experiences to explain or clarify information

. . . include relevant information and exclude extraneous material

. . . use "the writing process" to produce well-constructed informational texts

. . . observe basic writing conventions.

Student Work Sample

Report

The Iroquois

Iroquois were people of strong beliefs. They respected the world of nature and knew of its importance.

Hunting was very important to the Iroquois. Bullheads, sunfish, suckers and perch were main parts of their diet. They ate other foods such as corn, squash, and beans. These were called the three sisters because of their importance to the Iroquois. They also ate meat and a variety of nuts. They grew and hunted only what they needed and wasted nothing. They used fish for fertilizer and rotated their crops. Today we use chemicals, and often we do not let the soil rest.

Building shelter took about a week, seven suns. They sent some men to get bark while the others built the frame, which was made from young saplings. Trees were not clear cut for money as we do today. They used every part of the tree, too. The bark used, if laid out, would be seventy-seven feet long.

Ceremonies usually started in the evenings. The Iroquois first gave thanks and then danced and feasted. They sometimes threw tobacco in the fire as an offering. They gave thanks to the Spirits for their good fortune, harvests, good weather, and plentiful crops. They worshiped the natural world, they didn't hurt it.

The Iroquois used bones, rocks, and wood to make tools and weapons from. They also used parts of the animals when making these tools and weapons. Today our tools use electric power and are not as good for the environment.

Commentary

The sample:

- reflects use of a range of resources, including audio tapes and exhibit labels at the museum
- demonstrates a clear understanding of information gathered from the exhibits
- shows student's flexibility in introducing topic by highlighting the Iroquois' way of life and its environmental impact to engage the reader
- demonstrates independence in organization by weaving in details on hunting, building, ceremonies, and tools to support main ideas
- makes appropriate connections by developing a paragraph for each subtopic showing the way of life of the Iroquois and how they used their environment rather than abused it
- shows skillful use of language conventions, including some complex sentences, the use of commas in a series, and paragraphing.

Circumstances of Performance:

	Timed Assignment
√	**Extended Project**
	First Draft
√	**Revised Draft**
√	**Teacher-generated Topic**
	Student Choice
√	**Research Required**

Standard 1: Language for Information and Understanding

Elementary

Context

As part of the spring 1995 elementary language arts pilot assessment, third graders were asked to read excerpts from a guide to rabbit care, then write a letter to a friend relating the important information and ideas about caring for rabbits. They began by brainstorming a "shopping list" of items they would need, drafted their letter, shared their draft in small groups, then revised the letter based on the responses of their peers.

Student Work Sample

Letter of Information

Dear Friend:

I am going to Virginia, so please take care of my pet. I am sending you a Rabbit Care Guide Book.

In case you can' t read and do not know how to take care of the rabbit, I will explain how to do so in this letter.

Bring the hutch, the cage, the bedding, and all the other things the rabbit needs to your house. If the rabbit goes to the bathroom often, you may regularly have to change the litter box and bedding.

Let the rabbit out daily for exercise, be sure to keep it close, it may try to run away. A collar and leash is recommended

If the rabbit gets naughty, spray it with water.

Feed the rabbit daily dry food, greens, hay, and special food made of mixtures of food such as corn, nuts, and alfalfa pellets.

These are all the important things the rabbit needs, but the most important thing a rabbit needs is a friend!

Play with it a lot.

Have a happy and safe summer!

Performance Indicators

Students can:

. . .gather and interpret information from appropriate sources

. . .select information appropriate to the purpose of their investigation and relate ideas from one text to another

. . .present information clearly in a variety of oral and written forms

. . .use a few traditional structures for conveying information

. . .include relevant information and exclude extraneous material

. . .use "the writing process" to produce well-constructed informational texts

. . .observe basic writing conventions.

Commentary

The sample:

- reflects a clear understanding of information from the text
- establishes a friendly, informational tone which is appropriate to the request being made for help
- demonstrates an orderly arrangement of information; eg., elements of rabbit care
- illustrates correct use of basic writing conventions.

Circumstances of Performance:

	Timed Assignment
	Extended Project
	First Draft
√	Revised Draft
√	Teacher-generated Topic
	Student Choice
√	Research Required

Intermediate

Student Work Sample

How-to Essay

Context

Students in a seventh grade English class were asked to write an essay that described in an engaging way how to perform a complex task.

Performance Indicators

Students can:

. . . distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information and between fact and opinion

. . . relate new information to prior knowledge and experience

. . . produce oral and written reports on topics related to all school subjects

. . . establish an authoritative stance on the subject and provide references to establish the validity and verifiability of the information presented

. . . organize information according to an identifiable structure, such as compare/contrast or general to specific

. . . develop information with appropriate supporting material, such as facts, details, illustrative examples or anecdotes, and exclude extraneous material

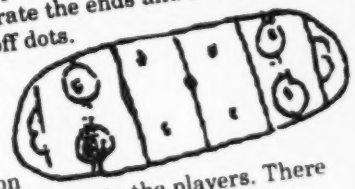
. . . use standard English for formal presentation of information, selecting appropriate grammatical constructions and vocabulary, using a variety of sentence structures, and observing the rules of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

Hockey Essay

"Ssssss . . . . . the crowd goes wild as N_____ scores again to break the tie for the win. With only 27 seconds left on the clock is it possible for the Bruins to win once more? To win the Stanley Cup Playoffs? Well folks, I think our question has been answered . . . . the puck is dropped then dumped into the Bruins' corner, it's dropped back to the point . . . . the clock's counting down . . . . 4, 3, 2, and the shot 1, 0, zzzzzz . . . . and the Bruins take the Stanley Cup! Their 5th consecutive title! Ladies and gentlemen, we once again thank you for coming. What a game!"

Playing hockey takes a lot of skill. You have to be able to skate, shoot, hit, pass, and lots of other things. But the most important is knowing how to play the game. In other words, the rules and the point.

The point of the game is to get the puck into the opponent's goal. The rules are more complicated . . . . we'll start off with off-sides. Off-sides is when you cross over the blue line before the puck enters the opponent's end of the ice. Therefore, you have to wait until the puck crosses. But before you get lost, you need to know that the rink is shaped like an oval. It is divided into 3 or 4 sections, depending on how you look at it. There are 2 blue lines to separate the ends and a red line in the middle. There are 9 face-off dots. Two in each end and 5 in the middle. There is a crease for the goalie which allows him a space to not get trampled. There are also hash marks on the face of the circle or dots to separate the players. There are 2 defensemen, a center and 2 wings plus the goalie, which equals 6 players on the ice for each team during the game.



Commentary

The sample:

- introduces the topic by adopting the style of sports reporting, adding humor and excitement to the writing
- demonstrates the student's knowledge and understanding of the game of hockey: rules, playing surface, necessary skills
- portrays the hockey rink visually to simplify complex description of area
- defines words used in special sports context, such as off-sides, slashing, cross-check
- shows effective use of language conventions, including appropriate use of punctuation, correct spelling, and variety of sentence structure.

Now back to the rules. You are not allowed to trip, slash, or crosscheck a person. Otherwise you are penalized 2 minutes in the penalty box. A cross-check is when you have your arms up, your stick held in both hands, and hit the person. Slashing is when you swing your stick at a person, and a trip is a trip. Once you reach a certain age you are allowed to hit and use slapshots. Slapshots are when you wind up to hit the puck, unlike wrist shots which are regular on the puck shots. There are certain ways you are allowed to check and certain ways you aren't. You are supposed to hit with your chest, keeping your arms in with your shoulder or with your hip. You're not allowed to elbow, rough or hit a person out of a 10 foot range from the puck. Elbowing is when you lift your elbow to the person. Roughing is when you have your arms and hands up too high when you hit the other player. Also you can't hit from behind. There are many rules to the game, but it is not as complicated as it seems.

The only other thing you need to play hockey is the courage and the mental strength, then you add ability to the game. I know I said the most important thing about playing hockey was knowing how to play—but, if you're going to play, first get the equipment!

Circumstances of Performance:

	Timed Assignment
	Extended Project
	First Draft
√	**Revised Draft**
√	**Teacher-generated Topic**
√	**Student Choice**
	Research Required

Commencement

Context

This ninth-grade report was prepared in response to an English/Global Studies project. Students were asked to choose from a variety of "cultural experiences", including examination of a book of art, to demonstrate their knowledge of Africa, Japan, or China. Students were asked to include in the report their reactions to this experience.

Student Work Sample

Report

Performance Indicators

Students can :

. . . interpret and analyze complex informational texts and presentations

. . . synthesize information from diverse sources and identify complexities and discrepancies in the information

. . . make perceptive and well-developed connections to prior knowledge

. . . evaluate writing strategies and presentational features that affect interpretation of the information

. . . write and present research reports, feature articles, and thesis / support papers on a variety of topics related to all school subjects

. . . present a controlling idea that conveys an individual perspective and insight into the topic

. . . support interpretations and decisions about relative significance of information with explicit statement, evidence, and appropriate argument

. . . use standard English skillfully, effectively applying established rules and conventions for presenting information.

Chinese Art

Broad, sweeping landscapes; benevolent figures meditating; snow-capped peaks thrusting out from misty clouds; a few brush-strokes suggesting so much. What do all of these artistic elements have in common? They are all prevalent in Chinese painting.

For my cultural experience, I examined the Chinese section of a book of Chinese and Japanese art. I was amazed at the variety of pieces, which ranged from truly stunning landscapes to scenes of everyday life that seemed almost dull and uninteresting. There were very few elements that were present in all the artwork I saw. In this respect, Chinese painting is very similar to Western painting. However, the similarity ends there. In all other respects, Chinese painting is very different from anything we as Americans are used to seeing. Most Chinese painting is full of blank or obscured areas that force the observer to interpret the painting by imagining parts of the scene. My experience was that this allows the painting to speak to the viewer because the viewer puts his or her own personality into the interpretation.

The first piece I would like to highlight is a figure painting by Ch'en Yung-Chih called "Buddha Under a Mango Tree". Like many paintings, this one is the artist's interpretation of another artist's work (in this case Wei-Ch'ih I-Seng). This piece is interesting because the figure has a peculiar expression of benevolent pleasure on his face. This creates the feeling that the artist had a very reverent attitude towards the Buddha, seeing him as a loving, nurturing being. An important element to this painting is the common mixture of specific detail (evident in the face and hands) and suggestive generality (in the background and foreground, and in the robes). This theme, which places emphasis on certain areas, appears over and over again in much Chinese painting.

Commentary

The sample:

- introduces the topic by highlighting significant features of Chinese painting
- develops the discussion by describing particular Chinese paintings that illustrate the significant features identified in the introduction
- makes connections with Western art, other artists, and other artistic themes
- demonstrates a broad range of information about artistic elements and styles, Chinese art, its meanings, and its effects on the viewer
- weaves personal reactions and insights into the analysis without being intrusive
- makes effective use of poetic language, in keeping with the topic of the report
- shows skillful use of language conventions, including sophisticated word choice; a variety of sentence structures; appropriate use of semi-colons and quotation marks; and correct spelling of artists' names and such difficult words as *prevalent, benevolent, reverence, and unparalleled.*

The second painting is a landscape detail from a handscroll by Mu-Ch'i (176). A handscroll is a long scroll, usually a landscape or a representation of a specific event, which is painted horizontally and meant to be kept rolled up (to be unrolled only for the time it is being viewed) rather than hung. This particular landscape, depicting mountains rising majestically from the sea, shows several common elements of landscape painting. First, the mist that blurs the transition between foreground, middle ground, and background is present to preserve the sense of mystical reverence for the earth. It represents Ch'i, the spirit of earth and life. Additionally, it adds depth to the composition, since it allows the artist to avoid defining a concrete boundary between water and land, as well as trees and mountains, that would show just how much distance is pictured. Second, this piece demonstrates excellently the typical distortion of perspective as we know it. Rather than using a single-point style of perspective as most Western art would, it uses a varied style of perspective. If one closely observes the mountains as they relate to the tree-lined shore, it can be seen that the perspective used for each is slightly different. This element contributes to the mystery of the landscape and makes the viewer look twice at the painting, a very important ability in creating a memorable painting. This is my favorite of the landscapes in this particular book.

The final picture I would like to comment on is by Li K'o-Jan, entitled "Two Scholars in a Wood" (204). In contrast to the other two paintings, written in the 11th and 13th centuries respectively, this piece is very modern, having been painted in 1940. This painting shows the effect Western art has had on Chinese painting. While still maintaining the traditional qualities of negative space to suggest distance and varied perspective, this piece carries a flavor that is somewhat impressionistic. A stylistic contrast that adds diversity to the piece is the contrast between the fluid, "blotchy" trees and the clean, sharp lines of the two figures. This difference seems to make a statement about the difference between humanity, which is nervous and preoccupied with details, and nature, which is fluid, eternal, and cyclic. This piece couldn't escape notice because it is so different from anything else in the book.

My experience of the paintings of China was both interesting and informative. I feel that I learned a lot about the Chinese people through their interpretation of life. For example, the landscape shows a reverence for the earth that is unparalleled in the Western world. Without being told, I learned about the attitude and philosophy of the Chinese culture.

Additionally, this experience taught me about myself and my culture, as I compared Chinese artists' interpretations with my own. The insightful analysis of humanity's weaknesses in "Two Scholars in a Wood" applies not just to the Chinese, but to everyone. By acknowledging the weakness this painting observes, we can grow as people.

Circumstances of Performance:

	Timed Assignment
√	Extended Project
	First Draft
√	Revised Draft
√	Teacher-generated Topic
√	Student Choice
√	Research Required

Standard 1: Language for Information and Understanding

Commencement

Context

This essay was written as a timed response to supplementary reading by an eleventh grade student in a Regents level class. The assignment was to use information from the text to explain how an individual in the book matures as a result of experiencing a "rite of passage."

Performance Indicators

Students can:

. . . interpret and analyze complex informational texts and presentations

. . . make distinctions about the relative value and significance of specific data, facts, and ideas

. . . make perceptive and well developed connections to prior knowledge

. . . write and present research reports, feature articles, and thesis/support papers on a variety of topics related to all school subjects

. . . present a controlling idea that conveys an individual perspective and insight into the topic

. . . support interpretations and decisions about relative significance of information with explicit statement, evidence, and appropriate argument

. . . use standard English skillfully, effectively applying established rules and conventions for presenting information.

Student Work Sample

Literary Essay

The Autobiography of Malcolm X

Though perhaps not [a reflection of] the traditional view of "rite of passage," two very powerful experiences made Malcolm X mature mentally and actually changed his life forever. Working as a hustler and pimp in Boston and Harlem, he was destined to be imprisoned sooner or later. The vast majority of people accept imprisonment as something which just occurs, and when released revert to their original lifestyle of drugs and crime. Malcolm X, however, used jail as an opportunity for self-improvement and, through the education he gave himself there, became an important member of his community.

The change started when family members who had been converted to a new type of American Islam began talking to Malcolm about it. The idea grew in him until he wrote daily letters to the movement's leader and believed more strongly in Allah than any of his family did. Educating himself by copying the dictionary and reading classics, he became the equivalent, in speech and writing, of a college-educated man. The way Malcolm dealt with the experience of jail - abstaining from cigarettes and drugs, educating himself, refusing to eat pork - was virtually unknown . . .

After his conversion to Islam and longtime work as an assistant to Mr. Elijah Mohammed, the nation's leader, Malcolm decided to fulfill the dictum of the Koran that all able Muslims should make a pilgrimage to Mecca. A black American Muslim, member of two minorities who had learned to hate the white man because of the personal gain or ego underlying his motives, Malcolm was shocked at the way he was

Commentary

The sample:

- demonstrates the writer's flexibility and independence by acknowledging that the "rite of passage" presented in this book may not reflect the traditional view
- presents an orderly discussion of the two major influences on Malcolm's life that could be considered his "rite of passage": the education he acquired in jail and his place as a leader in the Muslim community
- incorporates a wide range of specific information from the text
- makes appropriate connections between the text and prior knowledge ("Working as a hustler . . . destined to be imprisoned"; "the majority . . . revert to their original lifestyle") and among ideas in the text to support the writer's thesis and to elaborate on the two major influences in Malcolm's life
- shows a controlled and elegant use of language conventions, including sophisticated word choice, complex sentence structures, accurate use of introductory adverbial clauses, and appropriate use of semi-colons.

received in Mecca. Welcomed with open arms by people of every color, deluged with offers of translation help (he didn't speak Arabic), homes, food, guides, even given his own suite to stay in during his tour, Malcolm began to revise his views concerning the "evil white man." Having met so many brotherly whites truly unconcerned with the color of his skin, Malcolm concluded that it must be the society in America, not the people, which fosters the inequality seen by blacks and other minorities. Breaking, upon return to the United States, with Elijah Mohammed and his white-hating group, Malcolm started his own temple founded on an ever-changing set of beliefs, as what he had seen led him to convert to the true Islam and teach his people brotherhood and help for their fellow man. Eventually killed for these new beliefs, or the failure of the United States to acknowledge them, Malcolm became almost a martyr to the black people he had helped.

Though the rites of passage Malcolm underwent were not necessarily conventional, they were nevertheless rites applicable to the society in which he lived. Malcolm was changed enormously in thought, knowledge, and even action by these experiences; it is clear that his time in prison and his journey to Mecca had a direct influence on the life of Malcolm X.

Circumstances of Performance:

√	**Timed Assignment**
	Extended Project
√	**First Draft**
	Revised Draft
√	**Teacher-generated Topic**
√	**Student Choice**
	Research Required

Standard 1: Language for Information and Understanding

Commencement

Context

An eleventh grade student chose an issue of personal significance and read works in a variety of genres in order to explore the broad dimensions of that issue. She responded to questions of what new information or understandings she had gained, as well as to what opinions and judgments or evaluations she had formed through her reading. The report is one portion of an extended project which included journal entries and reflective pieces about her reading, as well as literary critiques of films and works of fiction dealing with her chosen issue. The selection is a final, revised version of earlier drafts.

Performance Indicators

Students can:

. . . write and present research reports . . . on a variety of topics related to all school subjects

. . . present a controlling idea that conveys an individual perspective and insight into the topic

. . . develop information with appropriate supporting materials, such as facts, details, illustrative examples . . .

. . . use the "writing process" to produce well-constructed informational reports

. . . use standard English for formal presentation of information.

Student Work Sample

Report

Anorexia Nervosa

Anorexia nervosa is a hidden disease. Anorexia is a delicacy to anoretics and is secretly disguised from the people around them. Many anoretics do not even know that they have the disorder. They are unaware that they are slowly killing themselves.

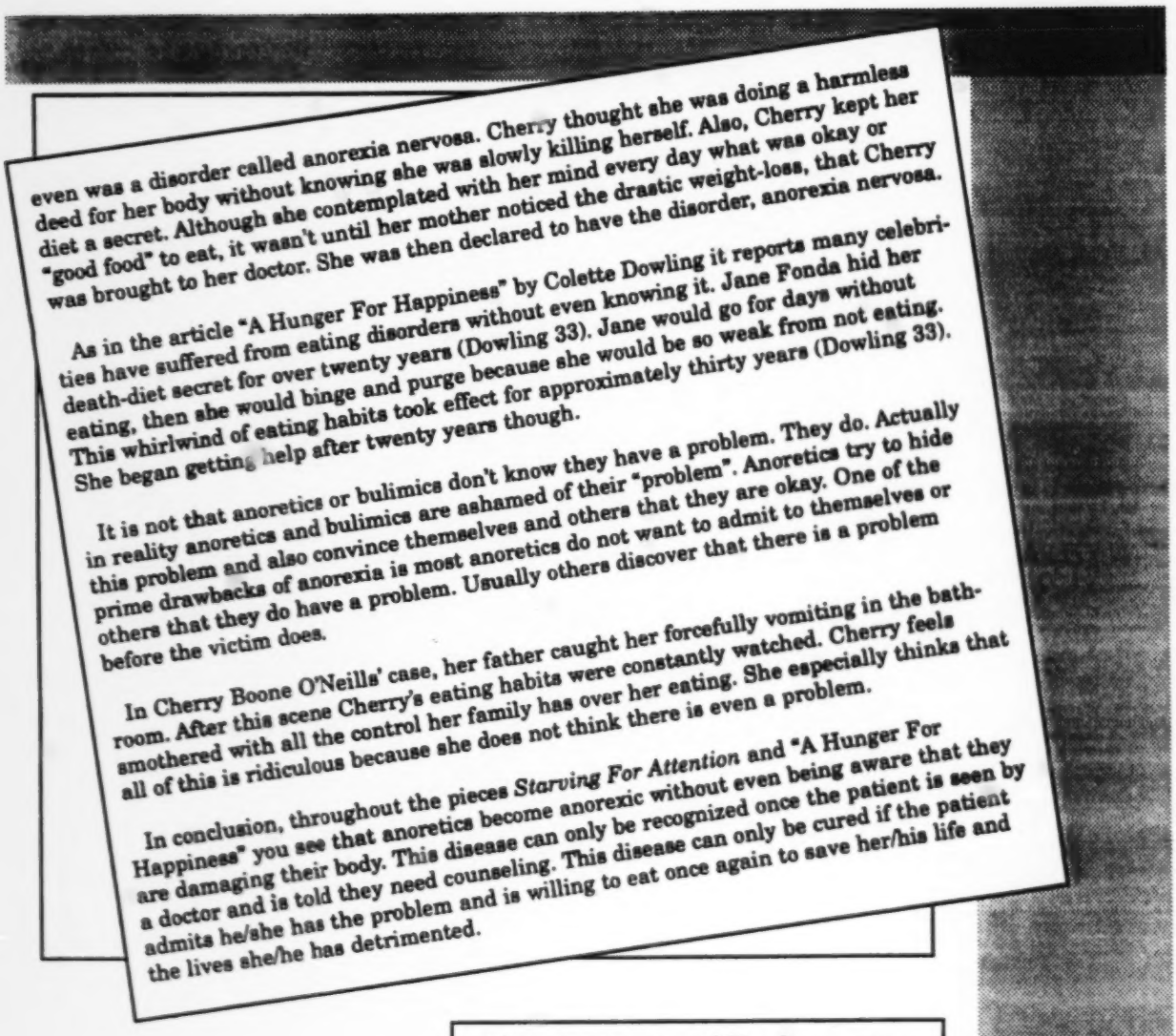
Many anoretics come from wealthy or comfortable middle-class homes where food and material possessions are readily available. Most are hardworking and well-behaved, before the disease takes over (Farley 47). Only a few come from broken homes. Unity in the family sets up for anorexia. Usually in this case the family is so close that the anorexic has no time to be dependent on herself. Instead the family takes it upon themselves to make their child dependent on them. There are often hidden tensions, power struggles, and deep seated confusion among family members (Claypool 59). Sometimes, the anoretic has tried to be perfect for years to please her family or to compensate for something lacking in her home life.

Through the biography, *Starving For Attention*, by Cherry Boone O'Neill the above is a prime example of what drove Cherry to such drastic and devastating measures. Although as with most anoretics, Cherry did not strive to become an anoretic. Cherry one day decided to watch her weight. While she was well into her death-diet she was unaware that there

Commentary

The sample:

- Introduces the topic with attention-getting language and sentence structure
- Develops the discussion by building on key ideas of secrecy and denial of anoretics
- Reflects variety of works consulted to prepare report (N.B. Bibliography submitted includes personal interview, videocassette, newspaper article referred to in other portions of extended project, of which this report is one component)
- Shows acceptable use of language conventions, with some errors or omissions in punctuation and occasional misuse of a word.



even was a disorder called anorexia nervosa. Cherry thought she was doing a harmless deed for her body without knowing she was slowly killing herself. Also, Cherry kept her diet a secret. Although she contemplated with her mind every day what was okay or "good food" to eat, it wasn't until her mother noticed the drastic weight-loss, that Cherry was brought to her doctor. She was then declared to have the disorder, anorexia nervosa.

As in the article "A Hunger For Happiness" by Colette Dowling it reports many celebrities have suffered from eating disorders without even knowing it. Jane Fonda hid her death-diet secret for over twenty years (Dowling 33). Jane would go for days without eating, then she would binge and purge because she would be so weak from not eating. This whirlwind of eating habits took effect for approximately thirty years (Dowling 33). She began getting help after twenty years though.

It is not that anoretics or bulimics don't know they have a problem. They do. Actually in reality anoretics and bulimics are ashamed of their "problem". Anoretics try to hide this problem and also convince themselves and others that they are okay. One of the prime drawbacks of anorexia is most anoretics do not want to admit to themselves or others that they do have a problem. Usually others discover that there is a problem before the victim does.

In Cherry Boone O'Neills' case, her father caught her forcefully vomiting in the bathroom. After this scene Cherry's eating habits were constantly watched. Cherry feels smothered with all the control her family has over her eating. She especially thinks that all of this is ridiculous because she does not think there is even a problem.

In conclusion, throughout the pieces *Starving For Attention* and "A Hunger For Happiness" you see that anoretics become anorexic without even being aware that they are damaging their body. This disease can only be recognized once the patient is seen by a doctor and is told they need counseling. This disease can only be cured if the patient admits he/she has the problem and is willing to eat once again to save her/his life and the lives she/he has detrimented.

Circumstances of Performance:

	Timed Assignment
√	**Extended Project**
	First Draft
√	**Revised Draft**
√	**Teacher-generated Topic**
√	**Student Choice**
√	**Research Required**

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Standard 2: Language for Literary Response and Expression

Elementary

Context

Fifth-grade students were asked to write a third-person narrative that incorporated their personal feelings about school.

Performance Indicators

Students can:

. . . recognize some features that distinguish the genres

. . . create their own stories, poems, and songs, using the elements of the literature they have read and appropriate vocabulary

. . . observe the conventions of grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation.

Student Work Sample

Narrative

Diane looks forward to school every morning. It's her absolute favorite place to be, and she loves it there. Once, one day, Diane arrived at school, but she wasn't looking forward to that day. The reason was because she had a test to take, the SAT's in math. She was great at math. It was her best subject. Her teacher had taught her a lot, like addition, fractions, long division, and all of those things fourth graders were expected to learn, but Diane was still very nervous. She even had butterflies in her stomach. When the test came, she tackled it, and did perfectly. She knew her score would come out excellent. While walking home, she wondered why she had made herself worry in the first place!

Commentary

The sample:

- demonstrates knowledge of the narrative form, with a lead that provides an immediate entry to the story, use of storytelling language such as "one day", a conversational style, and a circular structure that connects the ending with ideas expressed earlier in the text
- uses chronological order, an acceptable narrative structure
- reveals use of language for a particular effect; e.g., to describe the main character's anxiety and the change in her feelings from the beginning of the day to the end
- shows control over basic language conventions, including correct spelling, punctuation, use of commas in a series, and varied and complex sentence structures.

Circumstances of Performance:

√	**Timed Assignment**
	Extended Project
	First Draft
√	**Revised Draft**
√	**Teacher-generated Topic**
	Student Choice
	Research Required

Standard 2: Language for Literary Response and Expression

Intermediate

Student Work Sample

Short Story

Context

This tenth-grade story was written in response to an English/Biology interdisciplinary project. Students were asked to assume the voice and personality of a living organism and present a view of the world through its eyes. Students were expected to write creatively for a wide audience, using accurate scientific information. Later, they would incorporate factual information from this project into a formal science research paper and compare both writing experiences.

Performance Indicators

Students can:

. . . write stories, poems, literary essays, and plays that observe the conventions of the genre and contain interesting and effective language and voice

. . . use standard English effectively.

. . . interpret and analyze information from appropriate sources (Standard 1).

The Leafy Seadragon

"Gather around," said Grandma Leafy Seadragon, "It's story time."

My seahorse cousins and I swam over to Grandma Leafy Seadragon as quickly as we could, which is not very fast, even though our dorsal fin goes back and forth 30 times in one second.

"I love story time," said my cousin Horace.

"What story are you going to tell? " I asked.

"Today's story is a little different then usual. I'm going to tell you about my life, and how I grew up as a leafy seadragon," said Grandma.

"But I'm a seahorse! exclaimed Horace.

"I know," said Grandma, "but just like leafy seadragons, you have a head like a horse, a pouch like a kangaroo, a tail like a monkey, and a mouth like a straw. The only difference is that I have extra skin on me that looks like seaweed."

"Start the story," yelled Damian.

Grandma began by telling us that she grew up off the southern coast of Australia, among the coral reefs. After she hatched from her egg and emerged from her father's pouch, she was about half an inch long.

"Grandma, was I that small too?" asked my youngest cousin 2-Bert?

Commentary

The sample:

- demonstrates understanding of form and genre by using the technique of a story within a story
- demonstrates use of story conventions ("It's time for you to go to sleep now.")
- shows effective use of dialogue to characterize other seahorses in story; uses conventions of dialogue correctly
- includes evidence of scientific research
- uses language to arouse range of responses; e.g., humor, caution.

"Yes, you were," answered Grandma," and like everyone else, you doubled your size in one month."

"When I was growing up," continued Grandma, "I swam with my seahorse cousins, and we used to swim up to crabs. When they saw us, we would swim away as quickly as possible. If that happened and the crabs were hungry, they would hide behind me so that we would look like seaweed. The crab would go crazy trying to find us."

"Why didn't you play with the leafy seadragons?" asked Horace.

"Because," Grandma said," there were only three leafy seadragons that lived here in Australia. They were my parents and me."

"Grandma, have you ever seen a human before?" I asked.

"Yes I have, Dandy, but they are very dangerous. You all have to promise me that you will never go near humans, because if they catch you, they will eat you for dinner."

"I'm scared," cried Damian.

"Don't worry, just hide in the seaweed and stay very still, and they won't find you. Your color will help you to blend in."

"It's getting pretty late, "yawned Grandma. "I think it's time for you to go to sleep now."

"But grandma!"

"If you go to bed now, I'll continue my story tomorrow. Good night."

Circumstances of Performance:

	Timed Assignment
√	**Extended Project**
	First Draft
√	**Revised Draft**
√	**Teacher-generated Topic**
√	**Student Choice**
√	**Research Required**

Commencement

Student Work Sample

Poem

Context

This poem from a twelfth grade student was included in his creative writing portfolio because he considered it one of his three best pieces of writing for the semester. Here he experimented with free verse.

Performance Indicators

Students can:

. . . read and view independently and fluently across many genres of literature from many places and historical periods

. . . write original pieces in a variety of literary forms, correctly using the conventions of the genre and using structure and vocabulary to achieve an effect

. . . use standard English skillfully and with an individual style.

if i

if i tumble
(in love)
-again-

please do not
help me up; let me
free
f
a
l
l

through your kleenex
and into the humble void
of a soft refrain...

...like rain.

if i stumble
(upon love)
in two into you,
let me hit the ground running
only to trample the roses,
or
injure myself
on
pillows.

Commentary

The sample:

- experiments with such poetic elements as free verse, rhyme, metaphor, stanzas, imagery, and punctuation
- demonstrates the student's knowledge of form and genre by conveying a common human experience in an original way
- shows an understanding of complex texts (e.g., poetry by e. e. cummings) that use unusual structural devices
- uses language, tone, format, and conventions to evoke a range of responses; e.g., plays on words, internal alliteration, line breaks to reinforce theme of poem.

Circumstances of Performance:

	Timed Assignment
√	**Extended Project**
	First Draft
√	**Revised Draft**
	Teacher-generated Topic
√	**Student Choice**
	Research Required

Standard 2: Language for Literary Response and Expression

Commencement

Context

This ninth grader was asked to recreate an afternoon at the Globe Theatre during a performance of *Julius Caesar* or *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The student was to adopt a persona: actor, groundling playright, director, etc., and describe the performance from that perspective including the "modern" language of the period and employing information learned from classmates' oral presentations.

Performance Indicators

Students can:

. . . read and view independently and fluently across many genres of literature from many places and historical periods

. . . identify the distinguishing features of different literary genres, periods and traditions. . .

. . . write original pieces in a variety of literary forms, correctly using the conventions of the genre and using structure and vocabulary to achieve an effect

. . . make distinctions about the relative value and significance of specific data, facts, and ideas (Standard 1)

. . . use standard English skillfully and with an individual style.

Student Work Sample

Parody

An Afternoon at the Globe

After days of pleading with the head of the tailor's guild, he obliged me with one day to do as I pleased. Me mates and I concluded that we would go to the Globe Theatre to take in a play. I'd been working each night for a wee bit o' extra money so that I could pay me penny to enter. We decided to go to a play called *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*. 'Twas a play written by a prodigious playwright named William Shakespeare who is mightily popular of late. It is said to be a story of fairies and magic spells.

We came around a bend in the road, and for the first time I laid me eyes on the Globe Theatre. 'Twas an amazing sight. 'Twas gigantic and, and round. Round, mind you! I'd never seen anything of the sort in me life. The church was the only thing near its size.

Outside the entrance gate there was a massive crowd trying to get in. We made our way toward the entrance. At the gate we paid our hard earned, precious penny. The penny collector said our kind was to go to the center area where a crowd was forming. They were all pushing, laughing, reveling, and shouting.

When I entered the main arena, I couldn't help to not let me jaw drop. There were three magnificent levels of seating, each above the other. At each level I could see there was another penny collector. The rich folk were spending pennies like they were nothing.

As me mates and I entered the groundling pit, I couldn't help notice the vile stench that me fellow groundlings were producing. I paid it no mind and took pleasure in the groundling area with many folk to talk to. Everyone was still laughing and joking.

After a bit, I looked up at the rich people and their retinue. How calm and refined they appeared. I envied their fancy dress and their appealing outfits. I was also jealous that they had the luxury of seats because me feet were aching already.

Commentary

The sample:

- demonstrates use of a personal voice to show understanding of the Shakespearean era
- supports ideas with reference to the text and knowledge of the era
- makes comparisons with other members of the audience to show point of view
- uses language and persona of Shakespearean era
- conveys feelings, attitudes and ideas to the audience by using the cadence of natural speech and language that is appropriate to the time and engaging to the audience
- shows writer's control of language conventions including sophisticated use of dialect and word choice (e.g., *obliged, prodigious, reveling, audacious*)
- achieves a strong sense of story through accurate, colorful description of the theatre, its patrons, the play, and the experience of attending a play.

Up in the stands a vendor with a stack of paper shouted "Programs." I thought about what it was that he was selling because I did not know what a "program" was: 'Twas unknown to me, but I knew I'd no need for one since I couldn't read.

Suddenly, an actor came out of the doors in the back of the stage and announced that the play was about to begin. Quickly, the crowd fell silent as they prepared for the action to commence. A man and a woman led a group of people through the doors onto the stage. The man and woman were both in pretty clothing. I knew that that meant they were supposed to be a lord and 'is lady. I figured out their names by what they called each. The man was Theseus and the woman was Hippolyta. They spoke of their marriage plans and what entertainment they were going to have after the wedding. A man named Egeus came and asked Theseus to enforce the Athenian law on 'is daughter because she wouldn't obey him. Egeus wanted 'is daughter, Hermia, to marry a young lad named Demetrius, but Hermia loved Lysander. Hermia's best friend, Helena, loved Demetrius. 'Twas very hard to understand who loved who in this play. These lords and ladies spoke so beautifully. Their discourse almost had the sound of singing.

After they had left the stage a group of funny craftsmen came onto the scene. They were planning to perform the play "Pyramus and Thisbe" for Theseus's wedding. After that, lamentably I'm not sure what happened for a time because the groundlings got bored and started to fight and shout. Suddenly, the fight stopped because everyone wanted to see the fairies that had just appeared on stage. This part of the play interested me muchly. The king of the fairies, Oberon, contrived that ' is hobgoblin, Puck, would put love potion on the eyes of the Queen of the fairies so that she would fall in love with whomever she first saw upon awakening. And, as the gods would have it, 'twas a man with a Donkey's head, by the name of Bottom. Puck also put the potion on Lysander's eyes. Lysander woke, saw Helena, and instantly fell in love with her. Puck then placed the potion on Demetrius' eyes. He saw Helena and fell in love. Helena thought both gentlemen were teasing and that Hermia be teasing also. Lysander and Demetrius were angry at each other because they both wanted Helena. They started to duel with swords for her. The sword fight got all of us excited. There was much cheering for the fighters. The sword fight brought the groundlings into such an uproar that I missed parts of the play. From what I could see, after a surfeit of discourse, the three couples got married: Hermia to Lysander, Theseus to Hippolyta, and Helena to Demetrius.

After these weddings the three couples watched the play put on by the craftsmen. 'Twas a very funny play, filled with errors, foolishness, and malapropisms. Me favorite part of that play was the audacious fool who played the part of a wall and held out ' is hand to represent a chink in the wall.

When the play was done, everyone tried to leave at once creating a great tempest at the exit. Me mates and I made our way through the crowd.

We finally reached the bridge over the Thames just as the sun was setting. We had to hurry toward home after our long exciting day with our heads filled with many beguiling things, new and wondrous.

Circumstances of Performance:

	Timed Assignment
√	**Extended Project**
	First Draft
√	**Revised Draft**
√	**Teacher-generated Topic**
√	**Student Choice**
√	**Research Required**

Commencement

Student Work Sample

Response to Literature

Context

This eleventh-grader's response to an assignment to write a four paragraph essay to the poem "The Road Not Taken," reveals the student's reflections on his/her own decision-making. The student was asked to discuss choices available in a particular situation and how those choices related to the poem. Specifically, the teacher prompt asked: "Since your decision was based on your priorities, what have you realized as you reflect on that choice? What symbol could represent your choice? Find one line in the poem that expresses your feelings."

Performance Indicators

Students can:

. . . read and listen independently and fluently across many genres of literature

. . . understand how multiple levels of meaning are conveyed in a text

. . . produce oral and written responses to and interpretation of works of recognized literary merit.

Throughout my entire life, I have had to deal with being born missing a bone in my left arm. Growing up with a short arm was made tons easier with the love and support of my parents; they never let me think I was deformed, or abnormal or any different from other children. Because of my parents, I never felt sorry for myself, but I have always noticed others' reactions towards my short arm. Questions, stares and obnoxious responses to explanations have made me uncomfortable many times throughout my life, but never sorry.

When I was fifteen, in the prime of my high school career, I was offered the chance to lengthen my arm to the size of my other. During that time, in a new school with new people, I was more self-conscious than usual. At first, I thought this would be a terrific opportunity, and I even seriously considered the prospect of having a third operation. The decision was left completely up to me.

After some time, I learned what the process of the operation would be, and I realized that I had to make my decision. It took a while for me to weigh out the pros and cons of the surgery, why I would want it, or why it wouldn't be a good idea. I came to the conclusion that the only reason I would seriously consider having the surgery was for cosmetic purposes. My final decision not to follow through with the operation was made when I realized that I

Commentary

The sample:

- Introduces the response with startling statement that immediately engages the attention of the reader
- Compares the student's need to make a decision to that of the poet who struggled with which road to take, "Two roads diverged in a yellow wood, and sorry I could not travel both . . ." and "The decision was left completely up to me."
- Shows skillful use of language conventions, including sophisticated word choice (*deformed*, *obnoxious*), appropriate use of semi-colons and quotation marks, and correct spelling
- Focuses attention on personal meaning ("I chose not to have the surgery because I never needed to make myself feel better.")

was letting other people's discomfort with my arm affect me. I was not raised to allow others' opinions to make my decisions.

I think a fitting symbol for my choice not to have the surgery is a bottle of foundation. People use cover-up to hide their imperfections, to make themselves look and feel better. I chose not to have the surgery because I never needed to make myself feel better. As Robert Frost said once, "I took the one less traveled by and that has made all the difference."

Circumstances of Performance:

	Timed Assignment
	Extended Project
	First Draft
√	**Revised Draft**
√	**Teacher-generated Topic**
	Student Choice
√	**Research Required**

Elementary

Student Work Sample

Persuasive Essay

Context

Students in a fourth-grade class were asked to state their opinion about the school cafeteria becoming a McDonald's restaurant, to persuade the principal of their view, and to suggest ways to put their opinion into action.

Performance Indicators

Students can:

. . . recognize that the criteria one uses depends on one's point of view and purpose for the analysis

. . . express opinions, both orally and in writing, supporting their opinions with some evidence

. . . present arguments with reference to specific criteria that support the argument

. . . use effective vocabulary and follow the rules of grammer and usage in persuasive writing.

I strongly believe that the State Street School should have a McDonald's. Having a McDonald's in school will make lots more kids buy lunch. They will have more energy because they will eat all their food. Some kids don't eat all their cafeteria food because they don't like it. Now they will. It's a long time until lunch and they could look forward to something good to eat. Students will also be able to think better because they will have a full stomach and be ready to work. Most of the teachers would buy too. Last, the school would make more money. That's why I believe that the State Street School should have a McDonald's.

This is how the State Street School could get a McDonald's. The teachers and students will take a vote. They will write letters to the board of education. We will take a petition around town. That's how our State Street School will get a McDonald's and eat delicious french fries, Big Mac's, double cheeseburgers. Oh, it makes me dizzy just thinking of it.

Commentary

The sample:

- argues in favor of a McDonald's restaurant and provides four good reasons in support of the argument
- selects reasons that would convince the principal as audience
- uses persuasive techniques to develop the argument appropriate to the audience
- expresses a course of action clearly and cogently
- shows correct conventions such as capitalization and punctuation in contractions and possessives and uses a variety of sentence structures and correct paragraphing.

Circumstances of Performance:	
√	Timed Assignment
	Extended Project
	First Draft
√	Revised Draft
√	Teacher-generated Topic
√	Student Choice
	Research Required

Intermediate

Student Work Sample

Review

Context

This high school freshman writes a weekly column for the local newspaper. In this column, he evaluates the offerings at a nearby mall.

Performance Indicators

Students can:

. . . present clear analyses of issues, ideas, texts, and experiences, supporting their opinions with well-developed arguments

. . . develop arguments with effective use of details and evidence that reflect a coherent set of criteria

. . . use Standard English, precise vocabulary, and presentational strategies effectively to influence an audience.

Colonie-Center: It's a great mall for kids

While in Albany during the middle of the week recently, I stopped at Colonie Center for a few hours in the afternoon. The first thing I noticed was that it was air conditioned. In fact, I found myself going outside to warm up every now and then.

Colonie Center is a good place for younger kids because of the Disney studio store, the Waldenkids bookstore and the toy stores around the mall.

The Disney store is full of different articles of clothing with Disney characters, puzzles, miniature Disney character toys and Disney movies. A movie is always playing on the large screen in back of the store for kids to watch.

Waldenkids, a new bookstore for kids just built a few months ago, is full of all sorts of books and toys for young children. There are Barney books, Disney books and many other children's books.

I found that the mall was not very crowded and there were no "traffic jams" because of the wide hallways, which are filled with various types of live foliage, including many palm trees, a rarity in the North. Not only that, but the decor is very tasteful, the mall is kept extremely clean and the staff is friendly.

One unique thing I noticed was the circular glass elevator in the middle of the mall. It was very popular with the customers, as it was always crowded.

In the food court there were many different kinds of food for breakfast, lunch or dinner, ranging from hamburgers to cheese steaks, and for dessert there was the Great American Cookie Company, The Sweet Factory and a Haagen-Daz.

Commentary

The sample:

- clearly states the writer's impression of the mall; that is, it provides a favorable review of the mall's features, while also acknowledging some of its flaws
- balances the use of conventional criteria for evaluating public places such as cleanliness, attractiveness, and availability of food, with some personal criteria, such as appeal to children of different ages and availability of inexpensive items
- provides support for the writer's opinion through numerous, relevant, and specific details and examples
- uses language that is somewhat sophisticated ("palm trees, a rarity in the North," "decor . . . tasteful") while still accessible to the teenage audience
- engages the reader through use of humor (e.g., the reference to air conditioning) and direct address ("Is this a good mall, or what?").

The food court is always busy and the far end has many window seats overlooking the parking lot and Wolf Road.

Colonie Center has many interesting stores for teenagers, including The World of Sience,which has treasures for everyone including a mini planetarium, a whole model rocket center, puzzles, books of tricks, models and carved figures.

All the time you are in The World of Science, there is soothing, pleasant music playing from overhead. The music was from albums such as "Sounds of the Rainforest" and "The Cry of the Loon."

I noticed another store at the far end of the mall, called "Everything's $1.00." Is this a good mall, or what?

While traversing the mall, I found that it was inconvenient to get up to the second floor and then down again because of the very few escalators and stairs. I was always having to go to one end of the mall to find some stairs, then to the other end to find the store I wanted.

During my visit I discovered that although the mall doesn't have an organized mall walking program, people who want to walk for exercise do so freely.

Macy's takes up about one half of the entire mall. Almost all of the items in the store were completely out of my price range. It is filled with clothing, lamps, bedroom sets, and all kinds of household items—almost everything you'd ever want!

Colonie Center is filled with stores for all types of people and is easily accessible from either Wolf Road or Central Avenue. There is adequate parking for a very large number of people. It is obvious that any "back to school" shopping done here would be a great success.

Circumstances of Performance:

	Timed Assignment
	Extended Project
	First Draft
√	**Revised Draft**
	Teacher-generated Topic
√	**Student Choice**
√	**Research Required**

Commencement

Context

This historical narrative was prepared by a ninth-grade student as an interdisciplinary research project for Global Studies/English. Students were asked to research a topic and then to write a story using the research. Student writers tried to "share information about a particular character, in a particular time and place, with a particular problem."

Student Work Sample

Historical Narrative

Performance Indicators

Students can:

. . . analyze, interpret, and evaluate ideas, information, organization, and language of a wide range of general and technical texts and presentations across subject areas

. . . evaluate the quality of the texts and presentations from a variety of critical perspectives

. . . present orally and in writing well-developed analyses of issues, ideas, and texts

. . . make effective use of details, evidence, and arguments and of presentational strategies

. . . use standard English, a broad and precise vocabulary.

My Lai Massacre

The bright Asian sun slowly begins to dip below the horizon as my sister, Mui, and I carry buckets of water to our home in My Lai Village for dinner. (Rutledge, 1993, 63) As we enter our well-built bamboo home, I can smell the dried pork served with noodles that will be accompanied by rice and noodle soup. (West, 1991, 139) When the whole family is quietly eating, Mama tells us there is an important announcement that she will make after dinner. I know by the tone of Mama's voice it is something that concerns the war, but that isn't unusual. That is all I hear about since my older brothers Do and Dam have gone to war. While the rest of my family discuss the latest news on the upcoming rice harvest, I drift off into a land where there are no wars, and peace is the only subject people talk about. This peaceful land does not know the meaning of war and never will for all the inhabitants are friends. I keep on dreaming until Grandmama's firm voice interrupts my thoughts. . .

I wake up early the next morning to a rising sun that has just begun to peek out from the single white cloud surrounded by endless blue. Even though I had a restless sleep, I manage to get myself up and ready to work in the rice fields. . .

Before I head out to the rice fields, I sit down in the empty kitchen and get my fill of rice for the long, hot work day ahead. When I am finished, I grab my cone-shaped hat and a bag filled with rice seeds. (Rutledge, 1993, 62) I am then off for a day of seed planting, for the wet monsoon will be upon us soon. (West, 1991, 36)

I am one of the first villagers out on the fields. Cam, a family friend and neighbor, waves as he enters the rice fields to do his share of work. I smile and wave back at the kind-hearted man who is still getting over the death of his mother. Cam says that she will probably be reincarnated into a bird because she had such a free spirit and this is the only way to let it soar. (Rutledge, 1993, 54). . .

Commentary

The sample:

- shows how the student responds imaginatively to a variety of texts
- reflects the range of historical data selected, manipulated and interpreted
- establishes a first person narrator voice which establishes a tone, uses contrast effectively; e.g., pre and post attack conditions; regeneration of rice field vs. destruction of village
- uses imagery to good effect; e.g., image of family eating together creates a sense of calm before storm; image of father's body shielding children creates a sense of terrible loss and futility of war
- demonstrates the student's ability to present an alternative point of view; e.g., massacre from perspective of Vietnamese, not American girl
- shows skillful command of language conventions in correct dialogue, spelling, punctuation.

As I spread, as Mama would say, the "seeds of life", I hear a loud explosion come from the village. I immediately look up and see the few villagers on the rice field running at full speed to the village. I want to run too but I can't, something is keeping me from running, keeping me away from whatever danger envelops the village. . . As I round the last corner of the path, my stomach does a flip. Lying in a ditch is my dying mother and in her arms, screaming, is Tu. I try not to cry but I can't help from crying seeing my mother in such pain. As I am pulling my mother out of the ditch she tells me to stop and to come kneel by her side.

"Trinh," Mama whispers, struggling even to get words out of her mouth. "There is nothing you can do, I am dying. Take your brother and bring him to safety. Don't forget, my child, I will always love you. . . "

I sit by my lifeless mother in disbelief, thinking this isn't really happening to me. I cradle Tu who is still crying loudly, but of course he is still crying. I don't know how he survived being rolled into a ditch and seeing Mama shot. We sit by Mama for what seems like an eternity before I pick up Tu and begin to walk aimlessly down the path. . .

As Tu and I are making our way through the village, I hear my name being yelled over all the confusion.

"Trinh! Trinh! I am behind you! Look behind you!" I turn around and there is Papa! Oh, my dear Papa, he is alive! I begin to run towards him and when I reach him I finally break down into tears...

As we are walking swiftly away from the village, two men in camouflage outfits grab Papa, Tu and me. We resist with great force but the soldiers just yell at us in words that I cannot understand. The soldiers toss us in front of a hut burned down to ashes, with a group of villagers. With guns aimed directly at us they begin to shoot, not even thinking twice about what they are doing. (Wilson, 1990, 48). . .

Papa tells us to stay behind him, he will keep us safe. Doing as I am told, I hug hysterical Tu tightly and step behind my father. Just when I think the shooting has stopped, papa is hit and he falls backwards on top of us. (Bilton & Sim, 1992, 150) Tu is now screaming louder than ever as we lie under my father's limp body. I can now feel the tears streaming down my face along with Papa's blood trickling down my legs. Tu and I are so very tired and worn out that we couldn't possibly crawl from underneath Papa. The strong stench of blood finally reaches my nose, as my eyes roll back and my breath is taken away. . .

Circumstances of Performance:

	Timed Assignment
√	**Extended Project**
	First Draft
√	**Revised Draft**
√	**Teacher-generated Topic**
√	**Student Choice**
√	**Research Required**

Commencement

Student Work Sample

Self-Reflections

Context

In the following three excerpts from "metacognition letters" included in their portfolios, students from grades ten, eleven and twelve reflected on their growth as users of language and provided evidence for their self-evaluations from work accumulated over the year.

Performance Indicators

Students can:

. . . analyze, interpret, and evaluate ideas, information, organization, and language of a wide range of general and technical texts and presentations across subject areas

. . . evaluate the quality of the texts and presentations from a variety of critical perspectives

. . . present orally and in writing well-developed analyses of issues, ideas, and texts

. . . make effective use of details, evidence, and arguments and of presentational strategies

. . . monitor and adjust their own oral and written presentations to have the greatest influence on a particular audience

. . .use standard English, a broad and precise vocabulary.

1

The final and most recent piece to be included in my portfolio is the short story "14 Miles." This is probably my favorite piece, if not the best written one. This piece was well received, but that is not the reason that I chose it. I think it creates some extraordinary images. That makes me sound quite self glorifying, but I'm sorry. I didn't *mean* to write a good story! And right now as you read this, I'm sure that you're thinking "Oh. She's such a fool. What makes this piece so good?" Well, to begin with, the first and last sentences—"Mile 159" and "Mile 173." These two sentences give the piece a sense of continuity and provide a definite start and finish, enclosing the plot between these two markers. An example of the images that I think make this piece worthy of the *honor of being in my portfolio* is found in the second line, "The engine's low drone hummed along, and the repetitive thumping of concrete seams shook the coins in the change holder, tiny percussive clinks of copper against nickel and zinc." I could have just said "The car drove down the bumpy highway.and the change holder shook the coins." I didn't want to come right out and say that the car was on the road. It wasn't deeply hidden, but better than just blurting it out.This ingraining of the message, this "hiding" of the actual word was inspired by Matt Van Sleet's story, I guess. I liked how he, in the style of Hemingway, kept things just below the surface.

Commentary

The samples:

- recognize that decisions involving quality are both subjective and objective
- provide justification and defense of student's choices
- manipulate language for effect and show the power of sensory imagery to do that
- demonstrate the student's ability to make connections with an audience
- demonstrate student's awareness of such literary strategies as coherence, story structure, poetic devices, effective beginnings and endings
- connect story episodes to life experiences
- reflect the range of reading experiences in connecting their own writing to that of other authors
- show skillful use of language conventions including punctuation used appropriately, a variety of sentence structures, and the conventions of a reflective piece.

2

I will always be quick to admit that the most difficult goal I have set for myself involves public speaking. I don't do it well, but I am improving. Gone are the days of cold sweats and deep freezes. Well, nearly gone. But I have had the opportunity to demonstrate my improved confidence on several occasions. First of all, I managed to create a successful debate based on *The Effect of Gamma Rays on Man-in-the-Moon Marigolds*, and by doing so demonstrated an ability to successfully organize and interpret information, as well as present it to my peers. Not to mention that we were victorious. Also, I spoke to the class in regard to the play *A Doll's House*, in an attempt to convince them of the wisdom of a specific interpretation. Finally, I presented a piece of literature to the class, at the same time fulfilling one of my twelve activities and sharing with my peers a piece of literature that I personally love.

Unfortunately, time constraints prevented me from fully exploring this work with them. But, I think that it would be safe to say that much of my nervousness is gone, and that my confidence has been increased.

As a result, I am well on my way to achieving this goal.

3

My second poem I considered to be my best piece. "A glimpse of life" is a look at a pleasure in life and then the realization that it was never meant to be. I could quote each part of the entire piece as some example of good writing but am only going to use a few parts to show its effectiveness. *"i listen to trees whisper secrets / that neither of us wants to hear / of what we did together / and what we both hold dear."* This stanza uses personification to show that secrets are held between us and will never be told. I like this stanza because when I read it I am reminded of these secrets, and this stanza could remind someone else of secrets they *"hold dear."* Another part that shows feeling is the fourth and fifth stanzas. In them we see two people who have shared part of their lives with one another. All of us have shared our lives with someone and this is another reason why I like the poem. Whenever someone reads it they are reminded of someone or something in their life that means something to them. I believe it was Scott, during my presentation, who said this poem means something different to everyone. This is why I like the poem so much. Everyone has their own "michelle" in life that they can keep a secret in their own heart and this poem reminds them of it.

The story behind this poem has an interesting twist. The poem started out in class with the fantasy completion exercise. We were led through the fantasy completion and then wrote a journal entry about some part of the exercise. When we were asked to write a poem for class I chose to turn this journal entry into a poem. I hadn't intended for the poem to rhyme but I couldn't help it. I've included the journal entry in my portfolio to show how the poem started and also how it 'rhymed' itself. Right from the start I was amazed at how easily I could write a poem out of the entry. *"I emerge from the path into the clearing and see a structure; an old shack, maybe one-hundred years old. The boards that make up the outside are wet, warped and look black from dirt and water."* The beginning of the journal entry was almost exactly the same as the poem: *"i emerge from a path into a clearing / see a structure; an old shack / the boards that make up its walls / are wet, warped and black"* I couldn't believe as I wrote, how easy it was to change it to a poem. The ease of writing the beginning is illustrative of the ease of writing the entire piece. With a few exceptions the whole piece is almost the same as the journal entry with a few words that have been reordered. As I said in my journal entry, *"It is amazing how this little exercise has made me realize so much . . . I guess all I had to do was tell this story to someone."*

Circumstances of Performance:

	Timed Assignment
√	Extended Project
	First Draft
√	Revised Draft
√	Teacher-generated Topic
√	Student Choice
√	Research Required

Standard 3: Language for Critical Analysis and Evaluation

Commencement

Context

Following the reading of Franklin's *Autobiography* and Douglass' *Narrative of the Life of an American Slave*, eleventh-grade honors students were asked to choose from among several assignments to explain how one of these books influenced the student's thinking about the other. In this essay, the student has chosen to address the question: "Which is the 'better' book? Decide on a definition of 'better' and argue that Franklin's or Douglass' book is superior to the other."

Student Work Sample

Critical Essay

The Better Book

There is a difference, of course, between a good book and a better book. What exactly that difference is is open to debate. How, then, does a reader know whether a book, upon her completion of it, is better, worse, or on a par with the last volume she has read? These distinctions are based on our emotional reaction to the book. What factors are involved that cause these reactions is what must be investigated. *Narrative of the Life of an American Slave* is, by some standards, superior to *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*; now the question to be answered is, "Why?"

First of all, a good book is not a burden to read. It should go quickly, flow easily through the reader's mind, pull the reader in, and insulate her from the outward passage of time. The *Narrative*, only about sixty pages shorter than the *Autobiography*, is easily read in one day, at one sitting. Franklin's work, on the other hand, must be plodded laboriously through—at least for many readers—the end of each rambling anecdote both a victory and an excuse to give up for the day. At its conclusion, one feels only a sense of freedom from being burdened, rather than any emotion more complimentary to the book. At the close of the *Narrative*, one might feel a greater sense of satisfaction, as if something has been accomplished; one might also feel a curiosity about the rest of Douglass' life, a desire to learn more. This sense might be attributable to the books' respective endings—Douglass' *Narrative* has a true wrap-up whereas Franklin's *Autobiography* just seems to end in mid-paragraph, giving the reader the feeling that something is missing, that nothing has been truly achieved.

A great book should have a purpose that is common to many people; one that is not centered on the author, but the readers; one that is truly important. Douglass had a noble purpose in writing his life story: he tells the reader of it in the very last paragraph of the Appendix:

> Sincerely and earnestly hoping that this little book may do something toward throwing light on the American slave system, and hastening the glad day of deliverance to millions of my brethren in bonds—faithfully relying upon the power of the truth, love, and justice, for success in my humble efforts—and solemnly pledging myself anew to the sacred cause—I subscribe myself, FREDERICK DOUGLASS (126).

Performance Indicators

Students can:

. . . analyze, interpret, and evaluate ideas, information, organization, and language of a wide range of general and technical texts

. . . make precise determinations about the perspective of a particular writer or speaker by recognizing the relative weight they place on particular arguments and criteria

. . . present orally and in writing well-developed analyses of issues, ideas, and texts

. . . make effective use of details, evidence, and arguments and of presentational strategies

. . . use standard English.

Commentary

The sample:

- demonstrates the writer's flexibility by introducing the argument with a question and an answer to the assigned topic: "Which book is better: the *Narrative of the Life of an American Slave*, or *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*?"
- clearly establishes and consistently uses the criteria for judging the *Narrative* as the better book: it is more satisfying to read, compels the reader to continue reading, serves a noble purpose, and evokes a sympathetic response to the main character
- exhibits an organizational pattern that both anticipates and reinforces discussion of the criteria
- supports each criterion with relevant and specific references to the texts
- discusses similarities and differences in the content,

Obviously, Douglass knew well his duty to those people he left behind in chains, and was determined to do it. Among Franklin's reasons for writing what he wrote, all stated in the first paragraph of the *Autobiography*, are, above all, to tell posterity in general and his son in particular about his life, and to show them his life as an example that they might choose to follow; to go back over his own life and indulge himself in "that inclination so natural to old men of talking of themselves and their own actions" (17); and to gratify his own vanity. These are most definitely not bad reasons. They have their own small importance, and his life was certainly a notable one. On the other hand, Douglass' motives were of greater social and political consequence.

The importance of a book, as defined above, has a great bearing on how we react to that book. Tied into this concept is that of presentation: how well the subject is portrayed and how much we care about that person. If the reader has no concern for the subject's welfare, she won't care about the events taking place in the book, and so will lose interest in the entire work. Douglass evokes more sympathy because of the struggles he went through to educate himself, to have pride, to escape, and finally to help those others still entrapped. Throughout all this, he expresses no feelings of self-pity, only anger that people would reduce other people to such bestial circumstances. Franklin's battles pale significantly by comparison. In the *Narrative*, Douglass appears strong, passionate, angry, and sensitive to the pain of others, all at once. Upon comparison, Franklin seems a sort of inflated old man who never really suffered much. This may be unfair, but in comparing the two lives, Douglass comes out as the more noble, the one who fought harder for what he had, the one who is worthy of even greater respect. Where Franklin escaped from "poverty"—in reality the lower working-class, not rich, but truly not poverty-stricken—to influence and celebrity, Douglass escaped from slavery and into comfortable, active freedom, which he used to fight for the emancipation of his former fellow-slaves. These character impressions lead us to care more about the one than the other, and so to prefer the *Narrative* over the *Autobiography*.

In the end, both Franklin and Douglass were important, worthwhile men. Both the *Narrative* and the *Autobiography* are good books. By the standards dictated here, however, the *Narrative of the Life of an American Slave* is simply better.

Commentary Continued

context, point of view, and writer's presentation of the two books, integrating the reader's reactions and features of the texts to support the discussion

- presents an even-handed viewpoint; i.e., it acknowledges the value of one book while arguing for the superiority of the other

- provides a conclusion that succinctly restates the argument

- shows skillful and mature use of language, as evidenced in the use of rhetorical questions, parallel structures, e conventions of comparison and contrast, assured and selective use of words (e.g., "both a victory and an excuse . . ."), and correct use of a variety of punctuation devices.

Circumstances of Performance:

	Timed Assignment
√	**Extended Project**
	First Draft
√	**Revised Draft**
√	**Teacher-generated Topic**
√	**Student Choice**
	Research Required

Standard 4: Language for Social Interaction

Elementary

Student Work Sample

Acknowledgments

Context

As part of an autobiographical project using family members and close friend as resources, students included in their project an Acknowledgments Page, in which they expressed appreciation to those who helped them complete their reports successfully.

Performance Indicators

Students can:

. . . exchange friendly notes, card, and letters with friends, relatives, and pen pals to keep in touch and to commemorate special occasions

. . . adjust their vocabulary and style to take into account the nature of the relationship and the knowledge and interests of the person receiving the message.

I want to thank my mother for taking the time to help me with my project. She is a great inspiration to me. I want to thank her for her time, patience and efforts extended to make my report look great. Thanks, Mom, for all your help and love. I could not have done it without you.

I would like to thank my mother for helping me with the spelling, grammar and set up of this report. Thanks, too, to other people like my father, Nana, Pap, Grandma, Grandpa, Aunt Diane, and Uncle Stan for helping me to remember the information needed for this report.

I did most of this report by myself, but I have to thank my mother mostly, because without her teaching me to write well since I was younger I wouldn't have the skills I have now.

I do well on reports because my mother motivates me to. My mother helps me a lot too, because I'm a very bad speller.

I'd also like to thank my grandmother for reminding me that I was just like my brother and sister and so not to treat them like strangers.

Commentary

The sample:

- reflects students' familiarity with a simple genre associated with published texts
- combines formal and colloquial language ("efforts extended," "I would like to thank," "thanks, Mom,"), in recognition of the dual audiences for the text: a general audience and a specific audience
- uses personal references to reinforce the nature of the relationship between the writer and the person being thanked
- exhibits correct use of the basic conventions of spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and paragraphing, as appropriate for a published piece

Circumstances of Performance:

	Timed Assignment
√	Extended Project
	First Draft
√	Revised Draft
√	Teacher-generated Topic
√	Student Choice
√	Research Required

Intermediate

Student Work Sample

Friendly Letter

Context

As part of a class assignment, seventh grade students wrote letters to teachers who had influenced their lives. Students knew that letters would be mailed.

Performance Indicators

Students can:

. . . write social letters, cards, and electronic messages to friends, relatives, and community acquaintances

. . . use appropriate language and style for the situation and the audience and take into account the ideas and interests expressed by the person receiving the message.

Dear

I was in your class in the year of 1982-83. I am in Mrs. L---'s 7th grade English class now, and have an assignment to write to our favorite teacher. So I, with no hesitation, decided to write to you. While I wrote this letter I thought about all the wonderful things you did with the class.

I can remember clearly how you used to read stories to us everyday. You made it sound like we were really in the story. I think the reason why it sounded that way was because I wanted to be in another place. I wanted to be in another place because I felt I was being ignored.

My mother didn't have too much time to spend with me since she worked late hours and my father had to hold down two jobs. You helped me to understand that I wasn't being ignored and that I was loved by my family. I feel I understand that now.

You always stuck up for me. I remember the time I was accused of beating up another boy. You didn't believe that I could do such a thing. Anybody else would have said I was a bully. So you were really always there to stick up for me for me.

You always understood the way I did things. You always tried to help me get my grades up and more importantly, tried to show me I can do anything I put my mind to. Please write back to me as soon as possible. Thank you.

Your loyal pupil,

Commentary

The sample:

- anticipates the needs of the reader by establishing a purpose for the letter
- supports the choice of this teacher as the student's favorite with specific, personal examples and reasons that clearly illustrate the nature of the relationship
- uses a tone of respect and admiration as appropriate in a letter of appreciation
- reflects awareness of the conventions of letter writing, such as the expectation that the reader would respond to the communication

Circumstances of Performance:

	Timed Assignment
√	**Extended Project**
	First Draft
√	**Revised Draft**
√	**Teacher-generated Topic**
√	**Student Choice**
	Research Required

Standard 4: Language for Social Interaction

Commencement

Context

An eighth grade student wrote a letter to a teacher who had made a difference in his life. Students knew that letters would actually be mailed.

Performance Indicators

Students can:

. . . use a variety of print and electronic forms for social communication with peers and adults

. . . make effective use of language and style to connect the message with the audience and context

. . . study the social conventions and language conventions of writers from other groups and cultures and use those conventions to communicate with members of those groups.

Student Work Sample

Friendly Letter

Henry Adams said "A teacher affects eternity. He can never tell where his influence stops." Our assignment in English class is to write a letter to a teacher who has made a difference in our lives. Since I'm currently in the eighth grade, I've had many teachers over the years. Some were good, some were bad, but most were indifferent.

A teacher is like a gardener. She plants a seed, and she watches it grow. If she nurtures it carefully, a flower will eventually bloom. Mrs. L---, you have made the greatest impact in my school life. Before I was in your class, I didn't have any confidence in my writing ability. Now, I'm becoming more self-assured.

You showed me that you really care about my progress. When I had difficulty with some of the chapters in our assignments, you set up conferences to talk about it. You encouraged me with your suggestions. The many hours you spent in class giving us ideas on how to improve our writing helped a lot. The result is that two of your students won the County Reading Council's 1991 Young Authors Writing Contest. This is the first time in my life that I've ever been in first place. I'm very grateful to you.

Commentary

The sample:

- makes effective connections among message, audience and context; e.g., begins with a quote about a teacher, develops a simile for 'teacher', and substantiates with details
- engages the reader by establishing and maintaining conversational style throughout letter
- makes good use of the third person to personalize examples selected to show how teacher made a difference in the student's life
- demonstrates appropriate use of conventions, including sentence and paragraph structure, punctuation, spelling and usage.

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